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THE

*J. P. Dubois*

# RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS:

OR

## A VINDICATION

OF THE

## GOODNESS AND GRACE OF GOD,

TO BE MANIFESTED AT LAST, IN THE RECOVERY OF HIS WHOLE CREA-  
TION OUT OF THEIR FALL.

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BY JEREMIAH WHITE,

CHAPLAIN TO OLIVER CROMWELL.

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THE FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

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And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to  
preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation, and kindred,  
and tongue and people."—*Rev. xiv. 6.*

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# PREFACE.

THERE may possibly need something by way of apology, for putting out a book of this kind, especially in an age so profligate; and it may by some be looked upon as a design to promote *Libertinism*, and concur with the aim and end of too many writers of these times, under pretence of religion to undermine it at the root: but I doubt not but the seriousness and solidity with which this subject is managed, the zeal for the glory of God, the vindication of his most glorious attributes, and the earnest endeavours for promoting the love of God and charity to all mankind, which all along appear so conspicuous in this work, will soon convince the reader that there is a design of the utmost *service* to religion at the bottom; and that rather by a new topic of persuasion to bring in proselytes to the kingdom of grace, than to drive any from it.

With relation to God, it cannot but be an acceptable service to represent him in his most amiable excellencies, and vindicate the supereminence of his *love*, which is his nature, and the full latitude of his *mercy* and *goodness* towards his creatures, which has had a cloud or *veil* of darkness drawn over it in the minds of the generality of mankind; so that it has shown out less amiably, and less powerfully convincing and commanding the hearts and affections of men, and giving occasion to many that have been strong in the faculty of reasoning, and have taken their notions of God rather from thence than from the Scriptures, as translated and glossed upon, and represented according to the schemes and systems of these latter ages, by reason of the many inconsistencies therein, to throw off all *revealed* religion, and own only a God in such manner as can be proved by human reason; and others that have less consideration and use of that talent, through their immersion into sense, have hence had too great encouragement and too great arguments for atheism and libertinism itself. And those that would convince them upon the common hypotheses have wanted also their greatest arguments to prevail upon them. One instance I shall give, which I have been well informed of, and that is in the late *Earl of Rochester*, in the midst of all his extravagancies, both of opinion and practice: he was once in company with the author of this treatise, who discoursing with him about religion and the Being of a God, took the opportunity to display the goodness of God in its full latitude, according to the scheme laid down in this his present work; upon which the earl returned him for answer, "That he could approve of and like such a God as he had represented." So far was he from drawing any encouragement for his

loose principles from hence, that on this supposition he gave up the cause. And thus we may see how, with relation to mankind, if God were truly represented in the infinity of his grace and goodness, and the authority of those other schemes which give his justice so great a prevalence over his mercy, were rebated or taken off, many that can stand the shock or terrors of the common preaching of eternal wrath and damnation, or a hell-fire without end, might yet be reclaimed by the manifestation of the goodness of God when they should come to see, or understand it as it is. For *love is strongest*, and in its own nature most powerful to attract and to persuade. And therefore when it is objected, this doctrine ought not to be broached in a licentious age, apt to take hold of all occasions of encouragement: we must turn back the argument upon the objectors, and tell them, therefore there is need of greater strength and argument for persuasion; that the best wine at last should be drawn out, and the full strength of the love in its turn and season should be superadded to the strength of justice and judgment for influence upon the minds of men.

It may be yet said, "Supposing this doctrine to be true, that in the opinion of several that have held it, it ought to be kept as a secret, among such as may be fit to receive it, and not publicly exposed?" To this I answer,

1. 'Tis true, *Origen* himself says so: but this is not to be understood of writing upon the subject, for that he did himself most freely; but rather for the general conduct of our conversation, not to expose the mysteries of religion to such as could not receive them. But,

2. There is a *time* for all things. There is a time when all secrets are to be revealed and proclaimed upon the house tops. And this is in the latter day, in which *WISDOM* is to manifest herself, and knowledge to increase as the waters that cover the sea: Isa. ix. 11. See also *Dan. ult. iv. 10*. Yea, this very secret has its proper time to be revealed; as 1 Tim. ii. 6. i. e. "To be testified in due time."—And when is it, that this pouring out of knowledge is expected to be, and the manifestations of the hidden wisdom of God, but in the preparation or entrances of the blessed times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord, in his next or latter day advent, i. e. to his millennial kingdom; of which we hear the alarms at this very day, from all quarters and all parties; from such as have been students of the prophetic writers, or heedful observers of the signs of the times. As then in this very age, we have found many running to and fro, and knowledge increased,



so we may expect it will be yet much more so.

The occasion of our author's writing upon this subject is so very singular, that I believe some account thereof will be both acceptable and useful to such as shall incline to look into it. When he was at the University, and had studied all the schemes of divinity, he could not find from any, or from all of them together, that God was *good*, that God was *love*, as the Scriptures declare of him. This put him into a great dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind, from which he could no way extricate himself; but it grew upon him more and more, till it threw him into a fit of sickness, and that so dangerous that there was no hope of his recovery; but in it, at the most, he had a beam of divine grace darted upon his intellect, with a sudden, warm, and lively *impression*; which gave him immediately a new set of thoughts concerning God and his works, and the way of his dealing with his offending creatures, which, as they became the rule and standard of all his thoughts and measures of things afterwards, as I have heard him declare, so they gave in particular, the ground and occasion of this present design. And upon this he presently recovered. This, as reasonably may be supposed, might give occasion to an expression of greater freedom in his title, as he at first intended it; which we have taken the liberty to omit, lest any might stumble at it; yet the reader will find it mentioned by him in the book.

He had wrote at first more voluminously, but towards the latter end of his life he was busied in contracting and preparing it for the public service; in which he was more particularly taken up, and so brought it to a conclusion, a little before his death.

His *character* is great, and has been more than once given to the world in print; though on account of the offence many will be apt to take at the subject, it has been thought fit here to conceal his name.

He goes indeed upon the *predestinarian hypothesis*, as will appear in several passages of his work; but by his additional scheme makes it quite another thing, and entirely evacuates it as the severer part. But if any inured to other schemes of divinity are yet unsatisfied in this, they may take his general hypothesis of the restoration, and graft it upon their own, and it will suit as well; and serve to rectify and improve it, as it has done this.

There are many indeed that run so far in magnifying the method God has taken for manifestation of his grace and mercy towards his fallen creatures, as to imagine their fall was needed in order to the perfect display of the wonders of his goodness. Indeed there is something of a particular and partial manifestation accidentally made through the objects of mercy, rendered so by their sin and folly; but surely God needed not this accident to show that grace which was contained in, and but as a part of his essential goodness; and which might by the enlightened eye be contemplated therein; or by the works of God, and manifestation of himself, he exhibit-

ed to full view by the direct pencil of the divine wisdom, which operates all in perfect unity and harmony, and wants not the breach or division of the properties of nature in any degree of disproportion and disharmony, or of real contrariety in order to its own perfect product. And the accidental illustration of grace by sin and sufferings; seems to be chiefly in the passage through the vale of misery, or the first sensation of those that are admitted to the heavenly enjoyments, which without these extraneous and accessory excitements, go on increasing and multiplying without bound or end, from their own *eternal motives* and incentives; from the ground of the eternal and infinite fulness and perfection of the Godhead, as moving in its own harmonious unity, proceeding and manifesting itself, of itself, and by itself, in all harmonious variety; and that without any such thing as a defective foil; which has rather been an offence or impediment of its glory, only as this has, and still does, like the sun, break through the fog and discover itself.

In this work the author has gone only upon *Scripture* grounds; and yet from the Scriptures which he has produced and discoursed at large upon, he has sufficiently absolved the *rational* part. And for further confirmation, it has been thought fit here to add some testimonies both ancient and modern to this great point; and they are as follow.

ORIGEN is well known to be the great propagator of this doctrine, so that it might seem scarce needful to make citation from him to this purpose, yet as a leader of others, I shall here set him in the front, with a testimony or two. We find then, this learned father, *Origen in fine Lib. 8vi. Explanat in Epist. ad Rom.* declaring himself after this manner: "But he that despises the purifications of the Word of God, and the doctrine of the Gospel, is reserved for those dreadful and penal purifications afterwards; that so he may be purged by the fire and torment of hell, who would not receive purgation from the apostolic doctrine and evangelical word, according to that which is written of being 'purified by fire.' But how long this purification which is wrought out by penal fire shall endure, or for how many periods or ages it shall detain sinful souls in torment, he only knows to whom all judgment is committed by the Father."

And then, upon the same place and subject, he adds: "But we must still remember that the apostle would have this text accounted as a mystery, so as that the faithful and perfect ones may keep its secret sense among themselves, and not ordinarily divulge it to the imperfect and less capable of receiving it."

The next I shall cite, (and indeed who might have disputed precedency with the former, as being *Origen's* master, though less noted on this account) is CLEMENS ALEXAN-

\* [In this as well as in all the following references, we have omitted the passages as they occur in the original Latin or Greek, and have simply given the translations as they appear in the preface. Those who wish to consult the original can doubtless obtain the works from which the quotations are made.]



**DRINUS**; *Adumbrat. in Ep. 1. Johan.* printed at the end of his treatise, *Quis Dives Salvetur*; where he has these words:—"The Lord is not (says he, v. 2.) a propitiation for our sins only, that is, of the faithful, but also for the whole world. Therefore he indeed saves all universally; but some as converted by punishments, others by voluntary submission. And hence he obtains the honour and dignity, that to Him every knee shall bow, both of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, that is, angels, and men, and souls departed this life before his coming into the world.

Another is **GREGORY NAZIANZEN**. He tells us, *Paris Edit. 1630. Orat. Quadrag. Pag. 664, 665*.—"There is another fire, not for purging but for punishing; whether it be of that kind by which *Sodom* was destroyed, or whether that prepared for the devil, or that which proceeds before the face of the Lord [at his last advent], or lastly, which is most formidable of all, that which is conjoined with the worm that never dieth, which is not quenched, but burns perpetually upon the wicked. All these are of a destructive nature. If yet we are not even here [in the last kind of fire] to understand it more mildly [or with greater philanthropy or love to mankind] and more worthy of [or, suitable to the nature of] Him that punishes."

We have for another testimony, from **GREGORY NYSSENUS**. *In Dial. de Anima et Resurrect. Paris Edit. 1659*.—"For 'tis wholly and absolutely needful that evil should be removed out of the circle of being. For since evil is of that nature, that it cannot be without a will and purpose of its own; and since all will and arbitrement is in [and of right belongs to] God; how can it be otherwise, but that the evil must be entirely abolished, so that nothing shall remain that can be a receptacle of it." And again in his Catechetical Oration, chap. xxvi, p. 517, 'tis said of Christ, "Who is He that delivers man from evil, and who heals the inventor [or author] of evil himself."

**SULPICIUS SERVERUS**, *De Vita B. Martini, p. 488. Edit. Lugd. Bat. 1647*. "If thou, O miserable one, [speaking to the devil] would cease from the temptation and persecution of man, and repent thee of thy facts, even at this time of day when the judgment is so near at hand; I myself could with true assurance [or confidence] in God, promise thee the mercy of Christ."

This testimony, if it does not absolutely conclude for the point, yet it does against the so great difficulty and impossibility of it, which is by some supposed; and vindicates the good will of God, as all being ready, and nothing wanting on his part for the salvation of all his creatures. That which follows may likewise be of use to show the gentleness and tenderness wherewith the propagators of this doctrine have been received, and serve to open the narrowness, and allay the severity and rigidity of spirit, with which they are treated by many at this day: as also to shew that in the times of the latter, as well as elder fathers, there was still a reserve in the Church, of vindicators of the great love

of God and latitude of his grace. 'Tis from St. Austin, as follows.

**AUGUSTIN**. *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xxi. cap. 17. "And now I see I must have to do with our merciful men, and must dispute with them gently and peaceably, who either will not believe everlasting punishment to be inflicted on those whom the just Judge shall condemn to the pains of hell; or at least not on all of them: but that after certain periods of time, longer or shorter, according to the proportion of their crimes, they shall be delivered of that state."

**ST. JEROME**, at the end of his comment on *Isaiah*, speaks thus, concerning the opinion that hell torments shall have an end; though he himself was persuaded in and believed the eternity of the torments of devils and Atheists. "Which (matter) we ought to leave to the wisdom of God alone, whose judgments as well as his mercies are in weight and measure, and who well knows whom, or how, or for how long he ought to judge them."

I shall conclude these testimonies of the fathers with that of **FAUENUS**, *Episcop. Hermiensis*, lib. iv. cap. 4. pag. 62. *Edit. Paris. 1679*. "In the book which **DOMITIAN**, Bishop of Ancyra, wrote to **Vigilius**, he is found complaining of those that contradicted the doctrines of Origen, which maintained that the souls of men pre-existed in a state of happiness before they came into bodies; and that all those that were doomed to the eternal punishment, shall, together with the devil and his angels, be restored to their former state of blessedness." And after this he adds, "They have rashly run out to anathematize the most holy and most glorious doctors, (or teachers of the Church) on occasion of those doctrines that have been advanced concerning the pre-existence, and the restitution of all things. And this indeed under pretext of Origen, but thereby anathematizing all the (great) saints which were before him, and which have been after him." Thus have we the declaration and testimonies of two of the ancient fathers and bishops of the Church in one.

This is a taste of those numerous testimonies of the ancients to the truth of this doctrine; and those of the moderns are yet more numerous. There have been several books written on this subject in *French*, in the *High Dutch*, and the *Low Dutch*; and particularly in the *High German* by the learned Dr. Jo. W. Petersen, sometime Superintendent of Lunenburgh, at large in folio; where he has strenuously defended this point, and collected and adopted into his work the writings of several others upon this subject in lesser tracts: 'tis called *The Restitution of all Things*. There is also an ingenious piece written in *French* by a noble eminent lord and minister of the court of the King of Prussia, intitled, *Entretiens sur la Restitution Universelle de la Creation*: or, *A Conference upon the Universal Restitution of the Creation*; betwixt **Dositheus** and **Theophilus**. But to collect testimonies from all these would make a volume instead of a preface; therefore I shall content myself with producing a few testimonies from some of the learned or curious en-



quirers into this subject, some more, some less, that have been of our own nation.

GERARD WINSTANLEY, in his book *Of the Mystery of God*, &c. p. 9, printed 1649, declares thus: "Therefore I say the mystery of God is thus: God will bruise this serpent's head, and cast the murderer out of heaven, [i. e. of] the human nature where it dwells in part.—And he will dwell in that whole creation in time, and so deliver whole mankind out of their fall."

There is another treatise called *The Church Triumphant*: or, *A comfortable Treatise of the Amplitude and Largeness of Christ's Kingdom*; wherein is proved by Scripture and reason, that the number of the damned is inferior to that of the elect. By *Joseph Alford*, M. A. sometime fellow of *Oriel College*, Oxford. Printed An. 1644. The title-page of which being so full, I shall omit any further quotation from the book.

There is also a book written by *R. Stafford*, entitled, *Some Thoughts of the Life to come*, &c. Printed Anno 1693, in which this doctrine is notably asserted. We find here, p. 52, &c.—"So that let satan do his worst, as it is proverbially and truly said, *God is above the devil*; so his knowledge doth as much exceed the other, (who is a creature and by him made) as the whole ocean a single drop of water. In the 1st and 2d chapters of *Job*, and the 2d of *Zechariah*, and in *Rev. xii. 10*; we see and understand God's superlative and over-ruling goodness and equity; how he doth moderate the matter, and affirm it by the way of favour and mercy on the side of mankind. And this but as talking a little before the day of assize, an emblem and forerunner, how he will determine it eternally on their side, at the last and great day of judgment, notwithstanding all the informations, accusations and aggravations of Satan. And now if there should be any—who draw up more heavy and false inditement than the true and very nature of the thing doth require and will bear: or if the conscience itself (which is yet more) pressed with sin and guilt, should forecast too grievous things: all this will not do one jot of harm in the day of the Lord; for He who hath prepared his throne for judgment knows all things:—"With righteousness will he judge the world, and the people with equity. Psalm lxxxix. 9. Now equity is a mild thing, which doth state, moderate, and adjust a matter. And then after all, God doth reserve mercy, even after judgment and condemnation: for that is its proper place."

And afterwards, p. 55.—"But God only knows what may succeed after all this, when those miserable creatures have lain under condemnation and punishment, a much longer space of duration than six or seven thousand years, [the ages or evers of this lower creation] now God will look down from the height of his Sanctuary:—"From heaven will the Lord behold the earth," (yea, and who knows whether he will behold yet lower: 'If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there!')—"to hear the groaning of the prisoners, to loose them that are appointed to death." *Psa. cii. 19, 20*; [in the margin here, it is the children of death.] This one

Scripture is of more worth than ten thousand worlds. If any thing of good or mitigation is intended to them, it will come in upon this account; that they are the creatures of God and his workmanship: The Lord shall rejoice in his works, and they shall reciprocally rejoice in the Lord their God. If those very creatures who seem rejected, can but call upon him by the name of THE LORD, and lay hold on him as *Esau* did when he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, 'Bless me, even me, O my father! Hast thou but one blessing, O my father! [still putting in mind of the relation] bless me, even me also, O my father!' So it may be conceived of those condemned forlorn and miserable creatures—that after they have been long in wailing and gnashing of teeth—if they can but call upon him by the name of CREATOR, and remember and lay it before him, that they are the works of his hands:—God hath more than one blessing to saints and angels; he may make devils and condemned sinners hewers of wood and drawers of water.—'For I will not contend forever (saith the Lord), neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit would fail before me, and the souls which I have made.' *Isa. lvii. 18*.—"For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." *Rom. xi. 32*."

The learned Dr. HENRY MORE, in his *Divine Dialogues*, printed Anno 1668, especially that part which relates and pursues the vision of *Bathynous's silver and golden keys* (the keys of Providence,) speaks very favourably of this, yea covertly and at a distance involves it; not only in his direct maintaining the doctrine of pre-existence, which goes hand in hand with it; but laying down the more general principles from whence it flows.

We find, p. 479, BATHYNOUS speaking thus:—"I was not content to think of God in the gross only, but began to consider his nature more distinctly and accurately, and to contemplate and compare his attributes.—And I did confidently conclude, that infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, these three, were the chiefest and most comprehensive attributes of the divine nature; and that the sovereign of these was his goodness, the summity and flower, as I may so speak, of the Divinity; and that particularly whereby the souls of men become divine: whereas the largest communication of the other without this would not make them divine, but devils. In the mean time being versed in no other natural philosophy nor metaphysics but the vulgar; and expecting the laws of the external creation, either visible or invisible should be suitable to that excellent and lovely idea of the God-head, which with the most serious devotion and affection I entertained in my own breast; my mind was for a long time charged with inextricable puzzles and difficulties, to make the phenomena of the world and the vulgar opinions of men in any tolerable way to comfort or suit with these two chiefest attributes of God, his wisdom and his goodness."

This is a like plunge with that in which our author was found, as before-mentioned, viz. To make out that God was good: and



for the extricating of *Bathynous* [or the deep contemplator] out of his labyrinth, the vision of the two keys of Providence is ingeniously feigned: and the first sentence in the scroll discovered by the golden key, written in letters of gold, is this:

"The measure of Providence is the divine goodness: which has no bounds but itself; which is infinite." And another of the sentences asserts, the *pre-existence* of souls. Another, viz. 5, is, "In infinite myriads of free agents which were the framers of their own fortunes, it had been a wonder if they all of them had taken the same path; and therefore sin at the long run shook hands with opacity [or, the abyss of darkness]." And the 6th, is;—"As much as the light exceeds the shadows, so much do the regions of happiness exceed those of sin and misery."

The author of these dialogues would not go to the other six sentences, towards which he prepares the way, but makes *Bathynous* to be suddenly waked out of his dream by the braying of two asses; wittily hinting the reason why he concealed the other part of what might serve to clear up the providence of God, viz. the rudeness and clamour of narrow and ignorant spirits.

But lastly we find him asserting, p. 515. "You acknowledge then his *goodness* the leading attribute in the creation of the world, and his wisdom and power, to contrive and execute what his will actuated by his goodness did intend.—But this is a marvel of marvels to me, that the goodness of God being infinite, the effects thereof should be so narrow and finite as commonly men conceit; if there be no incapacity in the things themselves that thus straitens them. That one small share of the divine goodness should be active, but that the infinite remainder thereof, as I may so speak, silent and unactive, is a riddle, a miracle that does infinitely amaze me!"

This is indeed larger than what may be applied to the particular occasion, viz. of the time and manner of the creation of the world; but here the braying comes in again, expressed by *Sophrionius*: "O *Bathynous*, my very heart-strings are fretted with fear and anxiety, when you plunge into such profound disquisitions as these!" And so *Bathynous* keeps still to the first part of the scroll, in which he asserts *pre-existence*; but lays the ground for its sister tenet or doctrine, viz. the *restitution* of those spirits which had their descent into regions of punishment, for their defect and lapse from their pre-existent state; which, if not prevented by the weakness and incapacity of the hearer, had been discovered as the grand point of the *second* part of the scroll; and without which ward, as I may say, of the golden key, the greatest objections against Providence are yet in force, and the *goodness* of God, which he undertakes to vindicate, remains unasserted and almost as dark as before. But he here thought a word to the wise was sufficient.

That great and good man, Dr. JOHN TILLOTSON, late Archbishop of Canterbury, in his 4th volume of sermons, preached 1694, writes thus favourably upon the case, as with sus-

pence, and suspicion of the possibility of the truth of it, p. 164:

"The case then in short stands thus: Whenever we break the laws of God, we fall into his hands and lie at his mercy, and he may without injustice inflict what punishment upon us he pleaseth: and consequently to secure his law from violation, he may beforehand threaten what penalties he thinks fit and necessary to deter men from the transgression of it. And this is not esteemed unjust among men, to punish crimes that are committed in an instant, with the perpetual loss of estate, or liberty, or life. Secondly, this will appear yet more reasonable, when we consider, that after all, He that threatens hath still the power of execution in his hands. For there is this remarkable difference between promises and threatenings, that he who promiseth, passeth over a right to another, and thereby stands obliged to him in justice and faithfulness to make good his promise; and if he do not, the party to whom the promise is made is not only disappointed, but injuriously dealt withal. But in threatenings it is quite otherwise. He that threatens keeps the right of punishing in his own hand, and is not obliged to execute what he hath threatened any further than the reasons and ends of government do require: and he may without injury to the party threatened, remit and abate as much as he pleaseth of the punishment that he hath threatened: and because in so doing he is not worse but better than his word, nobody can find fault, or complain of any wrong or injustice thereby done to him.

"Nor is this any impeachment of God's truth and faithfulness, any more than is esteemed among men a piece of falsehood not to do what they have threatened. God did absolutely threaten the destruction of *Nineveh*, and his peevish prophet did understand the threatenings to be absolute, and was very angry with God for employing him in a message that was not made good. But God understood his own right, and did what he pleased, notwithstanding the threatening he had denounced; and for all *Jonah* was so touched in honour that he had rather himself had died than that *Nineveh* should not have been destroyed, only to have verified his message."

Also p. 179, he says:—"Origen, I know not for what good reason, is said to be of opinion, that the punishment of the devils and wicked men, after the day of judgment, will continue but for a thousand years; and that after that time they shall all be finally saved. I can hardly persuade myself that so wise and learned a man as Origen was, should be positive in an opinion for which there can be no certain ground in reason, especially for the punctual and precise term of a thousand years. But upon the whole matter, however it be; be it for a thousand years, or be it for a longer and unknown term, or be it for ever, which is plainly threatened in the gospel; I say, however it be, this is certain, that it is infinitely wiser to take care to avoid it, than to dispute it, and to run the final hazard of it. Put it which way we will, especially if we



put it at the worst, as in all prudence we ought to do, it is by all possible means to be provided against. So terrible, so intolerable is the thought, yea, the very least *suspicion* of being miserable for ever."

This has been looked upon as so open an *intimation* of this great man, that on this account he has been written against, in vindication of the *eternity* of hell-torments.

But the most full and pregnant testimony to this doctrine, we shall collect, and that pretty largely, from that ingenious *letter of resolution concerning the opinions of Origen, printed Anno 1661*, known among the learned to have been written by a *Bishop of the Church of England*, famous for his excellent tract, *De Veritate*. We find him declaring, p. 71,—

"I come now to the *Father's* fifth opinion, which is this; 'That after long periods of time the damned shall be delivered from their torments, and try their fortunes again in such regions of the world as their nature and present disposition fits them for.'—There are in some men's minds wonderful high reaches at great and unusual objects. That disposition of soul whence such extraordinary offers proceed, you may not improperly call, the *magnificence* of the intellect, which often hath something of temerity in it; as the moral virtue of that name not seldom hath some touch of *ambition*. But as we are very favourable to this, and apt to pardon its smaller extravagancies for the sake of those high designs and eminent works to which they adhere: so by the same reason and justice ought that other to be candidly sentenced by us, when it seems to slip, because of those raised and important discoveries it makes, where it lights right and happily; especially where it seems to have been betrayed by a forward and pious endeavour of doing honour to God. Which is *Origen's* case here; of whom his greatest adversaries cannot in reason but confess, that, the error they conceive him fallen into in this opinion, proceeded from his over great solicitude of rendering the ways of *Providence* clear, and righteous, and benign. Yet this, as strange as it looks, has its probabilities too as well as the former. For he looked upon God as making all things for their good and benefit; with this gracious design that they might be happy, according to their place and order in the infinite orb of beings."

And afterwards, p. 72, we read,—"*That eternal mind*, therefore, making all things out of a principle of infinite love, and for the good and happiness of the things themselves, and seeing what he had made, and how he had made them, and what was likely to be the lot of some of them, from the necessary imperfectness of their natures, if their future ill-hap was like to be infinitely more sharp and dolorous, than all the good they should enjoy from him, till that calamity befel them, grateful and pleasant; his great compassion certainly would have persuaded him quickly to annihilate them; or rather his wisdom would have judged it more decorous never to have made them. But we see such *mutable* creatures made, and hear nothing of their annihilation:—Therefore we may be assured,

there are such reserves in his most wise and gracious providence, as will both vindicate his sovereign goodness and wisdom from all just disparagement, and take such course with, and so dispose of all his creatures, as they shall never be but in such a condition, which, all things considered, will be more eligible than never to have been."

Again, speaking of *hell torments*, he adds:—"A sad and pityable state, and torture insufferable! But no doubt as just as great. Just, I say, not only according the estimation of modern *theology*, (which, from an excess of compliment to the justice of God, becomes almost as rude and troublesome as the ass in the *fable*, who did not fawn upon but invade his master; and which tragically pronounces that the least *peccadillo* highly deserves the greatest punishment conceivable;) but also in the compute and judgment of that All-righteous mind, which judges and orders all things by the living law of *equity*. But what, though it be so great and just;—is it therefore so *different* from the *reason* of all other punishments inflicted by God or man, that there is nothing in it of that *end* for which they are inflicted? They are *curative*, for the emendation of the party suffering; but this, if it be eternal in the *scholastic* sense of the word, leaves no place for the bettering of the sufferers, who are never to get out of this inexplicable labyrinth of woe and misery.—

"Now to think these miserable souls are so far amiss, as to be beyond the power of all redress and restitution, is to suppose God made some of his creatures very untowardly; and that when he pronounced them all very good, he looked only upon their primitive state: for, certainly, if he had cast his eyes to all possible conditions they might afterwards fall into, and seen this never-to-be-ended doom of intolerable pain and anguish of body and mind, the infinite compassionateness of his blessed nature would scarcely have given so cheerful an approbation to the works of his hands.—But then, to think they are not beyond the power of redress and recovery, and that that great punishment they shall undergo in the end of this world may contribute thereto, and yet to imagine they shall, for all this their *disposition*, be still kept in it for ever and ever, is to fix so harsh a note upon the mercy and *equity* of the righteous Judge of all the world, that the same temper in a man we should execrate and abominate."

And that the damned are in a probability, and even in a way of being bettered or disposed for grace, this learned *bishop* proceeds to shew from the *father*, viz., "That though the divine life is extinguished in them, their reason and consideration remain; and that their brutish desires being slack'd by the tormenting pains, and the ideas of their joys in sin consumed or become disgustful to them, any offer of release would be welcome to them." And then he adds: "What is it then that should make the merciful Governor of heaven and earth, and hell too, the compassionate Father of spirits, either forcibly to keep off and prevent this natural course of



things, or which is worse, suffer those offers or preparations which it induces for the bettering the present condition of so great and so considerable a part of his creation, and for the putting of them into a way of return to what he at first made them, to come to nought!—So that whithersoever we look, whether to the gracious *Providence* of God, or the necessity of the *nature* of things, we find some probable hope, that the punishment of the damned, as it implies the sense of pain, should not be *eternal* in the highest sense of the word.—But whether their *release* be by any change wrought in the dispositions of their spirits, but without death; or whether by an escape, as it were, by dying, to the body so tortured: there is no doubt to be made, but that both ways they may come into play again, and try their fortunes once more in such regions of the world as Providence judges fit for them.”

And towards the end of the book, p. 130, we have upon this head, something further, very considerable: viz. “Against the *fifth* [supposed error of the father] Epiphanius says not a syllable; I think he does not so much as barely name it; and I remember nothing in St. Jerome about it, but such admirations as these—“That the devils should become angels again! and Judas a saint!”—And since he has been pleased to say no more; I shall not say much, but only, what difference is there between a devil made an angel, and an angel made a devil? I am sure the advantage lies on the ascending part, rather than on the descending; for the mercy and compassion of God to all other works of his hands, may reasonably be supposed to help them up, though undeserving; but there is nothing in his most righteous nature, which would cast them down with their high demerit. But if St. Jerome wondered at this restitution, as certain, or easy, or of short despatch, tis his own mistake he wondered at, not Origen’s opinion, at least in the two last particulars.

“What *Methodius* disputes from the nature and reason of punishment, against Origen’s making the terrestrial body *δεσμὸν καὶ πέναν*, [the bond or confinement of the soul] if it be applied to the final punishment which God will inflict upon all the obdurately wicked in the end of this world, will as much confirm this fifth opinion, as he imagined through mistake of the father’s doctrines, and a pedantic accuracy in the use of a word, it would weaken the third; and so he really gives the father as much with one hand as he but thinks he takes from him with the other. For he very largely disputes in his *Socratical* way, that all punishment is *curative*, and for the emendation of the suffering party.”

“Some there are that think those phrases of *πράσαντος*, and *κίχαστις ἀιώνιον* [i. e. everlasting fire, and everlasting punishment] and the like, cannot be reconciled with Origen’s opinion. But these objectors seem to take the word *αἰών* [rendered everlasting] from scholastic definitions, rather than from the true and lawful masters of language, or the authentic rule of its popular use. For ’tis notoriously known, that the *Jews*, whether writing in Hebrew or Greek, do by *Gnolam* and *aiōn* mean

any remarkable period of duration, whether it be of life, or dispensation, or polity. Any of which periods, if plainly computable by a known time, they do then define it by a set number of years; but others which are not so known, they simply express by *Gnolam*, and *aiōn* leaving the length of them to be determined according to the subject matter; which, where it is such as comprehends more than a single determinable *aiōn* they express it in Hebrew by the phrase of *Lagnolam vagned*, in Greek by *ἡς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι* or *ἕως τὸς αἰῶνας*, and *ἕως αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*. But by none of these do they mean a *scholastic* eternity; unless the nature of the thing then expressed require such interminable duration. And hence the period of this world is called *aiōn otos*, when yet there is another to succeed, *aiōn ἐκείνους*. And as these *aiōn*s differ, so would also the meaning of *aiōnion* be different according as it was applied to the one or the other of them. And so in the plural, Christ is said to appear and suffer, *ἐπὶ συντηλείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων*, when yet the longest *aiōn* of all was not then come. And he of whom it is said, *Thy throne, O God is, ἕως τὸν αἰῶνα τῶν αἰώνων* [for ever and ever] yet to ‘deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, and to be subject himself to him, who did subject all things to him.’ So that here is plainly an end to that reign which is said to be *for ever and ever*. And as *αἰώνιον* does not in Scripture signify from all eternity, in the sense of the schools, so by the same reason ought not *ἕως αἰῶνα* to signify to all eternity, in the same notion: and is not *ἕως αἰῶνα*, and *αἰώνιον* all one! Every lexicographer and expositor will furnish you with authorities enough to confirm what I have said: and I leave you to judge, whether the whole subject matter in this *periodical doom*, the nature of that fire and its fuel, the power of a spirit incorporate, be not such as will enforce us to make it *shorter* than some men do; who having got easy ways of assuring themselves it shall not be their portion, do as little pity those calamitous souls whose lot it may be, as they darkly fancy God himself does. But though we from the reason of things and right use of the words, do make it shorter than they do; yet according to our *hypothesis*, the whole punishment of pain and death will necessarily be so long, as may justly be called *aiōnion*, in a very high sense of the word.

“But if out of filial respect to the authority of our dear mother the Church of England, you are yet something backward to give assent to the probability of Origen’s doctrine, I would have you first to consider, that all those that write and preach in this nation, are not her sons, no more than they of Geneva, Scotland, or New England are. Secondly, I would fain know why she, who in her xxxix articles does so punctually follow the articles agreed upon in King Edward’s days, or with little variation, should wholly omit that article which condemns the restorers of this opinion, if she had thought it ought to have been condemned.”—Thus far this excellent and ingenious author.

This doctrine has been cultivated by several

ral others: as, **SADLER**, in his *Olbia*; **PETER STERRY**, author of *The Freedom of the will*; the author of the *Enochian walks with GOD*, and the *Revelation of the everlasting Gospel Message*, to which an excellent preface is prefixed, running very deep into the rationale of it; as also by a Scotch gentleman, author of the *Cabalistical epistle*, printed in the *Theosophical Transactions*, No. 5, where he brings in the testimonies of the Jewish Rabbis conspiring also to the truth of this great point, with several others. But I must contain myself; and hope what is advanced may be sufficient to show, that this opinion is not so strange and unusual, nor counted so absurd a tenet by the pious and learned, both of elder and later times, as it is by the generality imagined to be.

And it may be further hoped, that seeing upon examination there appears so good

ground in Scripture, so great strength in reason, and such a cloud of witnesses to the truth of this doctrine, the design and endeavours of the editor of this work may yet meet with a more favourable reception, as in a time when the broken state of the Church obliges all to be looking towards the first foundation of it; and the revival of apostolical truths as well as practice, is so highly needful.

And lastly, if there be any thing sipt in the edition that may be complained of, he hopes it will be candidly censured, not having enjoyed his health for some time, during the attendance upon the press; so that it has necessarily been subject to various interruptions, and also changes from one hand to another; and so I shall no longer detain the reader from the body of the work itself; wishing him the satisfaction and benefit that it designs, and is also capable of giving him.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD LONDON EDITION.

THE first edition of this work was printed for Cliffe & Jackson, at the Three Crowns in the Poultry, 1712. Another edition was printed for J. Woodward, in Scalding Alley near Stocks-market, and J. Morphew near Stationer's Hall, to which no date was prefixed: the present\* is printed from that of 1712.—The writer of the preceding preface (for some particular reason) thought proper, at the publishing the book, to conceal the name of the author.

Neither in *Bayle's* nor in the *Biographical Dictionary*, is there any mention made of **JEREMIAH WHITE**;—the principal particulars I have read concerning him, are to be found in Dr. Calamy's *account of ejected ministers*, printed in 1713. Page 5, he says,

“**MR. JEREMIAH WHITE**, M. A. was fellow of Trinity College in Cambridge, and afterwards preacher to the Council of State, and household chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. He lived privately after the Restoration, preaching occasionally, without ever undertaking any pastoral charge. His conversation was very facetious, and much valued by some persons of rank and figure: he died anno 1707, *Æt.* 78—I know not of any thing of his writing being printed in his life-time, besides a funeral sermon for Mr. Francis Fuller, and since his death, a treatise of his has been published in octavo, entitled, *A Persuasive to moderation and forbearance in love, among the divided forms of Christians*, in which more of his works are promised.”

In Dr. Calamy's 1st volume of the *Continuation*, page 85, is as follows:

[\* This edition was printed in London, in the year 1779; for John Denis & Son, Booksellers, No. 2 Bridge street, near the Obelisk, Fleet street.]

“**MR. JEREMIAH WHITE**, had with a great deal of pains and charge made a collection of the sufferings of the dissenters by the penal laws, after the restoration in 1660, which contained an account of the ruin of many thousand families in the several parts of the kingdom, by the severities of those times; when King James the second came to the crown and gave the dissenters liberty, he was very much importuned by several to print this account. Some agents of King James were with him, and made him very considerable offers if he would publish it; but as circumstances then stood, he was not to be prevailed upon, for fear of strengthening the Popish interest, which I mention in honour to his memory.

“A book of his has been published since his death, entitled, ‘The restoration of all things;’ or, A vindication of the goodness and grace of God, to be manifested at last in the recovery of his whole creation out of their fall,’ octavo, 1712; but this is perfect *Origenism*, which is too unscriptural, too venturesome an hypothesis, to be depended on with safety.”—So far Dr. Calamy's account.

But there was a book in quarto, printed 1683, entitled, *The rise, race, and royalty of the kingdom of God in the soul*, by **PETER STERRY**; to which a most excellent preface was wrote by **JEREMIAH WHITE**.

The author of the preceding preface having inserted some quotations, both ancient and modern, in support of the doctrine of the *Restoration*, I shall take the liberty to mention a few other authors, who have written upon the same subject.

Anno 1658, a small book, entitled, “Of the torments of hell, the foundation shaken and removed; with many infallible proofs that



there is not to be a punishment that shall never end:" page 180, the author writes,—

"Such torments, of such continuance, in the least agree not to the gracious mind and merciful heart of a saint—he desires not any man or creature to be in such torment an hour; therefore it doth in no way agree to the mind of God. We find, the more the Lord manifests himself in any, the more their minds and spirits are humbled, the more loving and merciful they are, even to their enemies, and can do them good for evil. Christ is full of love and mercy to the worst of men: it was truly said of Christ, 'that he was a friend of publicans and sinners.' "

In a quarto book, printed anno 1653, entitled, *God's Light declared in Mysteries*, page 12, he says,—“Now, what is *hell*, or *darkness*? 'Tis a separation from an enjoyment that it was capable of; that is *hell*, and *devil*, and *liar*, and *false prophet*: they shall not come forth till they have paid the utmost farthing, then shall they receive mercy. For know, that God is good, and just, and merciful, and he will not punish a finite thing infinitely.”

RICHARD COPPIN, in his book called *Truth's Testimony*, printed 1655, says, “God hath declared in Scripture, both by the mouths of his prophets and apostles, the salvation of all men without respect of persons, 1 Tim. ii. 4-6. ‘He will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth: for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.’ Then may we say, ‘Lord, who hath resisted thy will? Let thy will be done.’ Paul says, ‘That as by one man death came to all, so by one life and salvation to all;’ else Christ were not sufficient to save all that Adam lost.”

WILLIAM ERBURY, minister in South Wales, appointed by the Committee in Oliver Cromwell's time, at a salary of £100 per annum, preached publicly the restoration of all men, and is charged by Mr. Edwards, in his *Gangrena*, p. 109, with holding many gross errors, one of which was that of *universal redemption*. This *Erbury*, although he had nothing to depend on for the support of himself and family but his salary, was obliged to throw it up, his conscience accusing him of preaching for hire: he published a treatise on that account, called *The Terror of Tythes*, alluding to the anxiety of his mind whilst he received them.

The late Dr. CHEYNE held this world to be a state of punishment, and in his discourses, p. 27, says,—“Some individuals may be delivered sooner, some later, according as their expiation and purification is perfected; and at last, the whole system and all its inhabitants, must naturally and necessarily, be harmoniously or analogically, and according to general laws, undergo some great and violent crisis, and an universal gaol delivery will be brought about, but when and how this will be accomplished, is beyond conjecture.”

Dr. THOMAS BURNET, master of the Charter House, and author of a book entitled “*The Theory of the Earth*,” left a treatise in Latin,

that was not printed in England before his death, entitled, *The State of Departed Souls*; page 343, he says,—“The soul flies from the thought and abhors the remembrance of everlasting misery; and several things have occurred to me, while I have been thinking on this subject, by which I am sensible that others have been persuaded, as well as myself, that God neither will or can endure the perpetual affliction and torment of his own creatures.”—p. 344. “That God should condemn his own creatures to a state of eternal misery, and should retain them in that state, seems to be repugnant both to divine wisdom and goodness, and I may add likewise, to justice.”

The second volume of *The World Unmasked*, or, *The Philosopher the greatest Cheat*, translated from the French, is a series of letters, proving from Scripture and reason the restoration of all men.

The late Rev. WILLIAM LAW, so well known by many pious divines, in his *Letters*, 1st edit. octavo, printed in 1766, says, page 175,—“As for the purification of all human nature, either in this world or some after ages, I fully believe it.”

I beg leave particularly to address myself to those readers, who believe in God's revealing himself to his creatures *now*, as well as heretofore, and that do not agree to that generally adopted theory, that, “Revelation is ceased;” to such I will quote a passage from Mr. MARSAY, a German; a small part of his works has been translated into English, and printed in Scotland, 1749, and is entitled, *Discourses on Subjects relating to a Spiritual Life*. Page, 165, speaking of the Restoration, he says:—“Esau and Pharaoh shall not be excluded from this act of grace, glory be to God in the highest! For all the kingdoms of the earth, even unto the most unfathomable depths, shall be subjected unto our God, and to his Christ: Thou wilt bring back all into thy sheep-fold, there shall not one be wanting.”

Mr. MARSAY, in different parts of his works, speaks of his having several revelations made to him of spiritual things, and in particular mentions, that he was under a necessity to assert the universal restoration of all things. In his *Comment on the Revelations*, 2 vols. 12mo, in French, he has asserted many wonderful and extraordinary things, which he says were manifested to him by revelation. The first treatise that was printed of his, was not wrote till the year 1735. The late Count Zinzendorf was with him some time where he resided: and 'tis but a few years since Mr. Marsay died.—There are many other authors besides the above, who have wrote on the *restoration of all men*; and great numbers of Protestants, have and do hold the doctrine of a middle state. [See Campbell's *Doctrine of a Middle State*, folio, printed anno, 1721.]

I doubt not, but the late reverend and pious Mr. HERVEY, was he alive, and charged, with holding the doctrine of a *middle state*, would be ready to oppose it, lest it should have any the least tendency towards the Romish doctrine of Purgatory, or a state of purification. Yet Mr. HERVEY, in his *Letters*,

vol., page 240, speaking of souls departed, says, "They rejoice in the prospect, the assuring and refreshing prospect of receiving all the fulness of their everlasting felicity. I said *fulness*; for though the felicity of the soul is great, yet it will not be complete till the body is re-united into it."—If Mr. Hervey's words are true, it certainly must be allowed they are placed in a middle state, beyond this mortal world, but not arrived to fulness of bliss. Now what I would desire is this, that those Christians that have so great an aversion to the word *purgatory* would only change it to *purification*, and admit it possible that a soul in that *middle state* may, for ought we know, have a growth in the spiritual life, as well there as in this world, if not more so, if they are better acquainted with the certainty of rewards and punishments than in this life. It is certain, the doctrine of purgatory as held by the Romish Church ought justly to be exploded, especially that part of it by which they reap a temporal profit from the gifts they receive for praying souls out of it. But on the other hand it is also certain, that praying for the dead was the constant practice of the Church for many ages, it was allowed and practiced by our first reformers, and has been approved of by many sincere Protestants.

As to those that assert, "That this world is the only place of probation," they assert more than they know, and if they are really sincere and pious Christians, more than they ought; for, as every real Christian allows the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and as some Christians have said, that they from that Spirit assert the Restoration, those that oppose it so strenuously, might do well to consider, whether or not it is not possible for another person's spiritual knowledge to exceed their's; and, if so, whether the assertion may not be a truth, although not apparent to them? God is said in Scripture to be "no respecter of persons," and with regard to his Almightyness need be no respecter of places: and if Adam could be tempted in Paradise, which as they tell us, was a place of bliss and excellency, why should the state of souls be fixed in futurity, any more than it was in Paradise or on this earth? We find, in Luke xviii. 27, when the people said to Jesus Christ, "Who then can be saved?" Christ answered, "The things that are impossible with men are possible with God." If we believe Christ really spoke those words, why should any man so violently oppose this doctrine;—more especially, as the Scriptures so often tell us, and all men naturally agree to it, that "God is love;" that "fury is not in him;" that "his tender mercies are over all his works;" that "he keepeth not his anger forever?" Yet, in direct opposition to these gracious characters of the Almighty, the doctrine of eternal damnation asserts the contrary. I would ask, can that power be merciful, that dooms a creature to eternal misery? Can it be said, "He keepeth not his anger forever," whilst any souls are continually to feel it? Can his "tender mercies," be felt by those that are condemned to feel for ever

and ever the utmost pain and torment? No, certainly it cannot. There are many thousands would gladly embrace the doctrine of the Restoration, did they not read in Scripture that of everlasting punishment; although it is allowed by all the learned in the languages, that the word translated *everlasting*, is not so, but only *ages*. How long or short a time those ages last, is known to God only. And here I cannot but think the words of Mr. POPE, in his *Universal Prayer*, worthy the most cordial reception:

"Let not this weak and erring hand  
Presume thy bolts to throw,  
And deal damnation round the land  
On each I judge thy foe.

"If I am right, thy grace impart  
Still in the right to stay;  
If I am wrong, O teach my heart  
To find that better way."

Would men but reflect a little on the above excellent lines, they would not be so hasty in their judgments.

The Rev. Mr. RICHARD CLARKE, in a book of his, published in 1763, entitled, "A voice of glad tidings to Jews and Gentiles," page 134, says,—  
"Whatever those spurious saints may think, who write their own names in the book of life, with a creed in their mouths after babbling forth its blasphemies and lies against God and his Christ, they indeed make it one of the highest joys in heaven, to view the miseries, and to hear the deep groans and dreadful shrieks of the damned in the never-ending torments of hell-fire. It is of no moment whether they are their parents or children in this horrible situation, which would reserve heaven itself to any but themselves. They write upon this ground with that abundance out of which the heart speaketh, so rejoiced do they seem in the distant idea of being spectators of eternal wrath and vengeance, that it would darken their joys to be told, that the first in salvation are to be kind ministers and instruments of saving others who are lost; under the Lord, the eldest of the elders, who according to the royal law appointed for princes, (and they are also kings in the heavenly worlds) must be servants to the later born, though those are punished for a while, and are under a very just rod and chastisement for their wilful obstinacy and stiff neck in sin and disobedience."

I hope the candid reader will not be offended at the passages here quoted from these authors. I could easily have enlarged the number of them, but I think these are sufficient to show, that eternal damnation is not an article of faith with all men. And indeed if those that oppose the doctrine of Restoration will allow, that God can save all mankind, if he will, I am at a loss to know how they can make damnation an article of faith at all, unless they attribute the same or worse passions to God than man. I know many say, "The glory of God requires it;" but I am led to think, that God can neither be glorified nor debased by all the actions of men. Man may receive from God, but cannot give



to him: again as Mr. POPE well expresses it ;

"What blessings thy free bounty gives  
Let me not cast away ;  
For God is paid when man receives :—  
'To enjoy is to obey.'"

I beg the reader's pardon for detaining him so long ; but knowing many people are unacquainted, that this doctrine of the Restoration is believed in and espoused by such a variety of authors, and at so many different periods of time, was the reason, why I added another preface to this edition. I know I shall be condemned by those that oppose the Restoration, and censured by many others that do believe in it. The first will call it "a damnable doctrine;" the others will say, that "publishing of it, opens a door to all manner of licentiousness; for if they are sure they shall go to heaven, it is no matter how they live!"—Of the first I would only desire, whenever they go about to condemn me, that they would only bear in mind the words of Christ, *I JUDGE NO MAN*:—if they regard this, I am sure they will not proceed to condemnation. As for the last, I would beg of them to look around, and see if the doctrine of eternal damnation has that effect, to make mankind act as if they believed it true; let them only consider the general actions of men, from the prince to the peasant,—how pride, avarice, and cruelty, is the spring of almost all their actions; and then let them

say if they can, they really think those people acting in that manner do believe even a future state! Sorry I am to say it, but I have observed in general, amongst those that make little or no profession of religion, more affability, generosity, and humanity than in the others. If this is really the case, what harm can proceed from adopting the belief of a general restoration, when all those that do believe it unanimously agree, that in proportion to the wickedness of their lives will be their punishment both as to pain and duration? For myself I can only say, that as I do believe God has the power to restore all mankind from their fallen state to a state of happiness, I cannot avoid believing he has the will (if I dare to say *will*, when I mention God) to do it; and that in God is neither anger, resentment, or any of those passions attributed by man to him. I allow, man, by his evil ways may bring on himself those racks and pains that he calls anger from God, but surely it is no more so in itself as to the creature, than the surgeon's instrument is to the body in particular cases. I could rather believe, there were no God at all—than to say he cannot perfect his work, or that he could designedly bring into existence millions of beings to be in pains and agonies to all eternity: I must say, I detest the thought.—I hope the readers will pardon this digression, and am their sincere well-wisher.

J. D.

## PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.\*

WHEN Cromwell was elevated to the Protectorship, popular zeal ran highest against the Catholic religion, and that of the Church of England, then generally termed prelacy. It would be a most difficult task to give a true picture of the Protector's character. Nearly all historians have agreed in representing him to have been a canting hypocrite; and no one, perhaps, has done this more effectually than Mr. Hume. Bishop Burnet remarks, that he "was for liberty, and the utmost latitude to all parties, so far as consisted with the peace and safety of his person and government; and therefore he was never jealous of any cause or sect, on the account of heresy or falsehood, but on his wiser accounts of political peace and quiet: and even the prejudice he had for the Episcopal party, was more for their being royalists, than for being of the good old church." The historian of the Puritans gives him a similar character. "The Protector was a Protestant, but affected to go under no denomination or

party: he had Chaplains of all persuasions; and though he was by principle an independent, he esteemed all reformed Churches as part of the Catholic Church: and without aiming to establish any tenets by force or violence, he witnessed, on all occasions, an extreme zeal for liberty of conscience." The cruel laws of the Parliament if they had at first a little force, were soon abrogated both by the spirit of the times, and an express statute. The army, which at this time was not to be slighted in any of its requests, petitioned "that all penal statutes and ordinances whereby many conscientious people were molested, and the propagation of the gospel hindered, might be removed;" but from this liberty Papists, and the members of the Church of England were excluded. This petition not long after was passed into a law and thereby all the former laws against erroneous opinions were repealed. The same toleration was provided for in the *Instrument of Government*, which was drawn up at the time Cromwell was declared Protector.\* By this toleration, the inculcation of Universalism was permitted without restraint, while

\* This preface, which is as appropriate here as though prepared expressly for this publication, is copied entire from an excellent work by Rev. Thomas Whittemore, published in Boston in 1830, and entitled, "The Modern History of Universalism, from the era of the Reformation to the present time."

\* For the articles of this instrument, as well as similar articles of another provision made in 1657, the reader is referred to the work from which this preface is taken, pp. 73, 74.

to deny the doctrine of the Trinity was prohibited. Political motives probably had so great an influence in the framing of these articles, that we are not permitted to award to their authors that high praise to which they would otherwise have been entitled. For if this indulgence to the various sects, sprang from a true love of religious liberty, why was so dishonourable an exception made to Catholics and Episcopalians!

Cromwell lived but a few years, to exercise regal power, in the character of a Protector; and being vested with the privilege of appointing his successor, he nominated, in his last moments, his son Richard to that high office. Richard, however, possessed not his father's talents; he was humane, honest and unassuming; and on the breaking out of dissensions after his father's death, he preferred rather to retire into private life, than to bear the storm of opposition and war in maintaining his dignity. The nation remained for a short time without any fixed government whatever; and finally, by the assistance of General Monk, who commanded an army in Scotland at the Protector's death, Charles II. took the throne, and restored the ancient order of things. As all the acts of Parliament without the consent of the king are null in themselves, so power alone was needed to make Episcopacy the national form of church government, and the xxxix Articles the established doctrine. The Act of Uniformity, whereby all those who refused to conform to the Established Church and worship, were rejected from her communion and emoluments, drove from their livings the clergy to the number of two thousand, and exalted to ease and affluence those who, in the administration of Cromwell, had been coupled with Papists, and made the subjects of a particular proscription. From this time until the present, the government and faith of the Church of England have remained unchanged.

Among the clergy who were excluded by the Act of Uniformity, we may reckon Jeremy White, who had been chaplain to Cromwell, and preacher to the Council of State. He is said to have been a person of great facetiousness in his conversation; and his company, on that account, was much valued by persons of high rank. On one occasion, however, the Protector showed himself a match for his Chaplain in quickness of thought. White had paid a particular attention to one of Cromwell's daughters; and being once detected by the father on his knees before the young lady, he averted his indignation by saying that he was entreating her influence with her maid, to whom he had long paid his addresses without success. The father, knowing the artifice, upbraided the maid for her supposed neglect, and immediately ordered the marriage between her and the outwitted Chaplain to take place.

It is probable his treatise on Universal Salvation was written before old age came on; for we are informed that he at first wrote voluminously, but towards the latter part of

his life, contracted the work, and prepared it for the press. Subsequently to the Restoration he preached occasionally, without undertaking any particular charge. With great pains and care he made a collection of the sufferings of the dissenters by the penal laws which were enacted in the reign of Charles II. wherein he gave an account of the ruin of several thousand families in different parts of the kingdom; but thinking it might subserve the cause of Popery, he rejected the importunity of some of King James' agents, and also large pecuniary rewards which were offered him to publish it. He died in the year 1707, aged 78.

"The Restoration of all things, or a vindication of the goodness and grace of God, to be manifested at last in the recovery of his whole creation out of their fall," was a posthumous work, and first printed five years after the author's death. As its title imports, its sole object is to set up and defend the doctrine of Universal Salvation, which is done entirely upon the ground of the Scriptures, according to the views he entertained of them. He had imbibed an aversion to the Arminian principles, which, previously to the Protectorship, had been the doctrine of many of the English prelates; hence he contends strenuously for predestination, election and reprobation; and he prized the views of the final happiness of all mankind, the more highly, because they enabled him to reconcile the decrees of God with his infinite benevolence. In the unchangeable plan of infinite wisdom, those who are elected and those who are reprobated will mutually benefit each other; the sanctification and salvation of the former are the pledge of the sanctification and salvation of the latter. He was a trinitarian, and held the doctrine of future punishment.

The plan of his work is as follows: in each chapter he produces the evidence on which he relies, and then anticipates and answers objections. His principal arguments are these: God will have all men to be saved. This is a will of authority, of supreme sovereignty; it is a fixed, determinate, irrevocable, purpose of him who ordains the means as well as the end. Jesus Christ gave himself a ransom for all men without any exception; and God is the Saviour of all men, finally, in the world to come. Jesus preached to the spirits in prison, men that were gone off the stage of this world; and he was not unsuccessful like Noah, but reclaimed the disobedient, who lived afterward according to God in the spirit. Mercy is promised to the most rebellious of our race, and the gospel according to the divine command, is to be preached to every creature. That all things are to be restored, is evident from Paul's testimony both to the Ephesians, and Colossians: we have the assurance of this truth in the character of God, who is love, whose perfections are all love, and to which his very anger is subservient: and lastly, the Scriptures assure us of the complete abounding of grace over all sin and all death.



# THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE great *Apostle* who lay in the bosom of his *Lord*, and partook of his intimate favours, as the disciple of Love, and consequently most nearly admitted into the secrets of God; and the revelation of his nature and goodwill towards men; and yet further grace and glories to be manifested in his *Church*, tells us, as in singular expression of the divine nature, that it is LOVE. 1 John, iv. 8. "He that loveth not, knoweth not GOD: for God is love." And again, ver. 16. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." And this is indeed the greatest of all the revelations given through this great apostle. God in the expression of his nature is not said to be *justice*, to be *wisdom*, to be *power*, but to be *just*, *wise*, *powerful*, &c. Though yet in a more metaphysical sense it may be said, God is justice itself, wisdom itself, and power itself, i. e. in the abstract; but yet so as these and all his other attributes and perfections concur together, and harmonize in unity, to make up the nature of God. And thus love is all: and "God is love," And love is a *unity*, the most perfect unity, which is *all in one*. And it is a *variety*, all variety displayed in that unity, in most perfect excellence and beauty. Yea, love is a *Trinity in unity*; this involved in the very *idea* and nature of love, as we must here necessarily take it in its utmost perfection, and its eternally triumphant act. In God or Love, as the *unity*, there must be the eternal *loving* or *Lover*; the eternally *loved*, or *beloved*; and the eternal *product*, or fruit, of that love, or love in its manifestation, which as it is brought forth within the bosom of its Parent, i. e. love derivative in the bosom of Love original, which is infinite, cannot be excluded, or exist in a separate essence, but must *abide* forever in the womb of its conception, and consequently *re-act* eternally in love upon its original.

And as this necessary truth of the glorious Trinity in unity in the perfect nature of God, has been perverted and denied by many, through the extravagant sallies and presumption of human reason in things above its line and capacity; so the general nature of God also as *Love*, has been by most of the schemes of later orthodoxy almost as much injured and misrepresented to the world; and a sort of confusion of the divine attributes introduced, derogatory to the unity, predominance and supremacy of love; which is the divine nature; in giving his justice as emanating or outflowing in its strange work, or anger, a

kind of co-equality and co-eternity with his love. His *original justice* is indeed co-eternal with himself, as the law of his divine nature, and the harmonious movements of it; and the glass or pattern of perfect righteousness and excellence exhibited for imitation and reflection of God in and from his creatures; but his strange work and movement in justice, i. e. in indignation against sin and sinners, as it was in accommodation to a movement of the creature, i. e. within the limits of time and accident; so as time and accident, and whatsoever implies a defect cannot be eternal, neither can this strange and accidental movement in God be so; but as his justice is subservient and acts to the end of his love which is supreme, the kindled fire in the severity of the Divine justice upon the hay and stubble, or the defect of sin, so hateful in the eye of God, must burn it up at last, and render the creature by such due chastisement and preparation capable of the grace and favour of God again; and the outflowing anger of God in strict vindictive justice, vindictive of the honour of the lese Majesty of God, and of his *right* to rule over and in all his creatures according to his own eternal will and nature, i. e. in his love having done its work must be resumed itself at last into its primeval, eternal act, viz. of *original justice*, as moving in the unity of the eternal nature or love of God; and here according to its particular nature and office, maintaining and keeping all the works of God, viz. of the original and restored creation, in that eternal order and harmonious movement, in and for which he at first designed them, and in order to which his anger, or *zeal of justice* run out after them as rebels, to subdue and reduce them back again to their obedience to the Kingdom of Love.

I shall endeavour to make good this Hypothesis in the following work; and that from the ground of Holy Scripture, which is pregnant of evidence to this great truth. And this design I shall pursue with all plainness imaginable, because all mankind is concerned in it, and therefore it is both reasonable and necessary my style should descend as low, and reach as far as my design, and be as universal in respect of the capacities of men, as it is for their interest.

The apostle saith in 1 Cor. xiii. 9, "We know but in part, and prophecy but in part." They that assume more than this, exalt themselves above that great apostle. I will, at present take it for granted, that God hath given forth what *Scripture* he intends, that the canon is perfect and sealed, but as God was

long and leisurely in giving it out, as the *Greek* speaks, Heb. i. 1. "So the mind of God therein is not understood but by portions, as He is pleased to give it forth." St. Peter tells us, the prophets themselves understood not the accents and imports of their own prophecies: God proportioning his discoveries with a kind of equality among his children and favourites, reserving some things for the last and youngest, that they who went before without us should not be made perfect. Heb. xi. 40.

That which occurs to me in my observation, as the *Desiderandum*, to loosen the hard knots and difficulties in the case, is the acknowledgment of a common, or rather universal grace and salvation, and the reconciling thereof, with special and peculiar grace and favour: which varieth not much from that which the apostle suggests to be wanting, as that, that would (when added) supply and perfect both our discovery, and our living in that forementioned *love*, 1 Cor. xiii.; which is ever spoken of with peculiar honour, as of a perfective nature, (1 John iv. 18.) and is called the bond of perfectness, Col. iii. 14. And, in John iv. 9. the apostle tells us, "We love God, because he first loved us." Until God's love in the heights and depths, and other the dimensions of it be known, the spring, the seed, the producing cause of our love to God, and our brother is wanting.

But this will appear plainly to our experience, in the instance of the controversy between the *Orthodox*, as they are vulgarly called, and the *Arminians*, in which so many learned and pious pens on both sides have sweat and tired themselves and their readers, but not satisfied them; for all that hath been hitherto suggested by the first, doth by no means salve those harsh phenomenas of an appearing harshness in God, in the exercise of that sovereign prerogative of his, which they most rightly allow to him, and which is necessarily vested in him as Supreme; but thus exercised with the irreparable damage of the creature, justly seems so disagreeable to his goodness, that from hence the latter, viz. *Arminians*, have with (it may be) a pure intention of mind, run into another most absurd extreme, and have taken occasion thereby to ascribe a power unto man, and a freedom of will absolute and independent as to those acts relating to a future state, setting him up in a capacity of a right conduct of himself, and by common grace, to the making void and needless the covenant of grace, and the blood of Christ himself in the high and glorious ends of it. And all this market for Satan hath been made, by not rightly discerning and stating the sovereign prerogative of God, and the qualified and righteous exercise thereof; wherein, although he fully displays the glory of his wisdom, holiness, justice, and severity in the suffering of man to make a full discovery of himself, his own defectibility, vertibility, mutability, vanity, and pride, and also punishes him for the same according to his works. Yet this not finally and irremediably so as to abandon and forget his grace and goodness forever: nay, he gives scope to those glories, those other glories of

his, to manifest themselves so fully, in order to that sweetest, fullest, and most triumphant glorious close he will make at last, when all shall meet and end in grace and love, as in a stately pyramid or top stone, they being all but steps to this throne, and guardians of it. And thus also, all the sin, vanity, and instability of the creature (which is the matter and occasion about which those subordinate glories are employed and exercised) shall at last issue and break up into the wonderful and glorious manifestation of the wisdom and goodness of God, into an admirable foil and set-off to his immutability and eternity. And if sin and punishment be but instrumental in God's design, and subordinate to an higher and more ultimate project and end, then it must be bounded and circumscribed within a certain space and limit of time, how great soever that be, be it for the whole course of time, which may be therefore termed for ever and everlasting, comprehending this world, and the world next to come, which are both of them but a double parenthesis in eternity; yet as it had a beginning, so it must have an end, and must lie down and yield up itself in that abyss of boundless and endless love and grace which was before it, and let it come forth for its own glory, and must shine forth in the perfect conquest and subduing of it to the harmony of the first all-comprehending design, as the sun without a cloud forever.

And here I do, in the fear of God, most humbly prostrate myself before his Divine Majesty, and in the deepest sense of my own darkness and distance from him, do with all my might beg of that infinite goodness I am endeavouring to represent to others, that if something like to this platform and prospect of things, be not agreeable to that revealed and natural light he hath given to us, that my undertaking may be interrupted, my design fall, and that the Lord would pardon my attempt: and I know he will do so, for he hath given me to have no further concern for this matter, than as I apprehend it to be a most glorious truth, witnessed to both by the Scriptures of truth, and by the most essential principles of our own reason, and which will be found so at the last opening of the *everlasting* Gospel, to recover in that opening a degenerate world. But if this be a true draught and representation of the glorious designment of the ever blessed goodness of the great God, who is goodness itself, and if the Holy Scriptures and right reason do bear witness unto it, how clear, how fair, how open lies the way before us to justify the sovereign power, and disposal of God, which he exercises by election and reprobation too, with all the methods he useth in his holy and glorious wisdom and prudence, in giving way to the entrance of sin, and then enflaming the anguish of it by the law, that he may thereby have occasion to glorify his justice and wrath against it, and so make his way to the more glorious illustration of his grace and love in the close. And how apposite, effectual, and justifiable a course of proceeding will the way of God now appear in humbling poor, proud man, in bringing him to his foot, making him to know himself, how frail and



foolish a thing he is, how unfit for the conduct of himself, will appear from the light which the end and design of God therein reflects upon it, which is but to make him a meet and subject spouse for his own embraces at last, having no will, no wisdom, nothing of his own to rejoice or glory in, but to be wholly given up as a passive subject for this all-glorious and ever-pregnant fulness to empty and pour forth himself into and upon to all eternity.

In a word, in this account and prospect there is, as we shall see in the sequel of this discourse, nothing omitted, nothing quarrelled, nothing excluded of all the ways and methods of God with men, which have been by good minds variously contended for.

Here his universal grace doth no longer thrust out his special and peculiar favour. Reprobation here will be found consisting with election, yea, damnation itself with salvation; here all those knots which the other systems of divinity have hitherto tied faster, are in a great measure loosened.

Here all those difficulties in the Christian religion, which have so long perplexed the more thinking and enquiring minds, are, if not quite removed, at least made so easy, that we may with some contentment and pleasure wait for that state which can alone perfectly satisfy us. And yet all this while, nothing of moment in Christianity is any way assaulted and shaken, but all is much better established and confirmed, being hereby made one entire piece, most pure and pleasant from the highest truth, and the highest good, meeting both in one throughout the whole contrivance.

Here the freedom and peculiarity of God's grace is fully reconciled to the amplitude and extent of it. Here we may behold the sovereignty, the absoluteness of God, and his goodness embracing each other with the greatest delight to him, and to us, whilst we now see this sovereignty and absoluteness of God to be sovereignly and absolutely good, and his goodness alone thus absolute and sovereign. Here all those false, barbarous and monstrous representations of a God are taken away which have hitherto hindered so many minds (otherwise ingenious) from owning of him, for fear they should at the same time they acknowledge the supreme Being, reproach and blaspheme him, by leaving out the highest and most essential perfection of his Deity, which is goodness, or at least making it more narrow, limited, and contracted, than that of a finite and imperfect creature.

Here, in a word, all the scenes of time, and all things done therein, are with an unspeakable pleasure discovered and seen to be environed, encompassed, enfolded in the arms and embraces of eternity, lying down and resting there, as in the end to which they were eternally ordained.

He is not a Christian, he is not a man, he hath put off the tenderness and bowels of a man, he hath lost humanity itself, he hath not so much charity as *Dives* expressed in hell, that cannot readily cry out, "This is good news if it be true;" that will not say

*Amen* to it, provided it be agreeable to God, and what his word will countenance and own; for under no other law or condition can we groundedly rejoice in any doctrine, than as it bears the impress and stamp of divine authority, and tends to his glory, to which all must bow: for heaven itself must pass away, rather than the gospel be innovated, or another gospel broached, how gratifying or acceptable soever to our fleshly minds. Upon this supposition then, I conclude this doctrine must be acceptable and welcome to every good man.

It is a fond self-love which computes the riches of God's grace, from that respect it hath to a man's self; but wherever a true and generous spirit of love and goodness doth reside, it will account that most rich and free which is of the largest extent. It is certainly no argument of rejoicing to a good man, that he here enjoys more than others do, for he would be better pleased if they were as happy as himself, if he did not see or believe some wise and good ends why it is not so; but none such can be found out for such a difference of cases in that state hereafter, as we shall see more at large in its proper place. It is the nature of every good man to rejoice in the good of others, to take pleasure in being instrumental thereto, and this his temper of mind is a participation of God, a beam, a ray, a spark of the divine image and nature, and the highest perfection that the soul of man is capable of. If then we will do honour to God, and pronounce, according to our faculties, and the best light that heaven hath given us, must we not conclude that God is infinitely better, more loving, more tender, more pitiful and compassionate in all degrees both of intention and extension, than the very best, yea, than all the sons of men put together?

Now in the trial of this great concern and cause, I shall first produce the evidence I have for this scheme, and then answer the several objections which may be brought against it, and so leave the impartial reader, when he hath perused and considered what can be said on both sides, to pass his judgment upon the whole matter. And here I desire again, that if I have a truth of God to manage, and this be the due season for the publishing of it, that he would throughout this whole discourse, prepare and assist my mind with that humility, purity, spirituality, light, love, and strength from his Holy Spirit, as may enable me to manifest it, as I ought, to all persons interested in it, and to maintain it against all the opposition I expect to meet with from all sorts of persons that have already found their satisfaction, and taken up their rest in their present measures of understanding. But if otherwise it be a delusion, a dream, a fancy, or the vision of my own brain, I do unfeignedly beseech God mercifully to stop my pen, that I may neither create trouble to myself, or to the church of God, which ought to be, and is more dear to me than myself.

I do also sincerely declare to all those who are partakers of that spirit, which is a spirit of meekness and divine love, as well as of

truth, that they cannot do any thing more acceptable to me, than in that spirit to endeavour to convince me of the falsehood and evil of this undertaking, for as no man willingly takes counterfeits for realities, or affects to be cozened in the riches of this world, so much less can any reasonable being choose to be deceived in the belief of truth, or disappointed in his expectation of good, which are the most peculiar treasures of the mind, since that which lies within me, is more truly mine than any thing without me can be supposed to be; nor can I be so confidently assured of any thing as I modestly am of this, that if what I am attempting to make out, be not some part, and indeed a principal part of that truth and goodness, which all intellectual nature is every where seeking after and must finally rest in. This discovery, from what hand soever it comes, will be more welcome to me, than the greatest antidote in the world, if upon a mistake I had drank in the worst of poisons.

And if after this ingenuous acknowledgment, any shall undertake to answer this discourse by reviling and reproaching the author, let them daub me as much as they please: but let them take heed of defiling, and wronging themselves by so doing; and beware, lest when by their rash censures they run upon me, they do not at the same time blindly rush upon the hiding of power, which the prophet *Habakkuk*, speaking of CHRIST in the spirit, tells us, is in his hand, *Hab. iii. 4*, viz. In those spiritual discoveries of Christ, which are as hands of light by which he puts forth himself, and takes hold of the world.

For my own part, I find my mind perfectly satisfied by this love which hath subdued me to this undertaking, quietly to leave the whole matter to that day, which will make all things manifest, and declare every man's works, of what sort it is; for my conscience bears me witness, that no particular nor selfish interest of any kind, but a sincere aim at the glory of God, by a right representation of him to the children of men, and an universal charity and good-will to all mankind; yea to all my fellow creatures, hath set me on work, and after many struggles and exercises of mind extorted this discourse from me.

I have often observed with great admiration and pleasure, those most affectionate eruptions of spirit and strongest pangs of love in Moses and Paul. "Blot me out of the book," saith one, "I could be accursed from Christ," saith the other, for the sake of my brethren. I sometimes feel so much of the same love working in my soul, that I can hardly think those expressions were hyperboles, much less that they ought to have such lean interpretations as is usually put upon them.

It was a noble speech of a great person, and I should think must be the sense of every good man's soul: "Might it be lawful for me to put forth one act of Omnipotence, that I might redeem poor, sunk, degenerate souls, then I would be content to be buried in the grave of an eternal nothing."

I verily believe, that a man thoroughly acted by a spirit of goodness, would be ever content to live in a banishment from God, I mean from the sweet illapses and touches of his love, so that he might be without sin, rather than any of God's creation should be ever unacquainted with him, and therefore he thinks it would be the best employment, and greatest happiness in the world to be used as an instrument to such a universal good.

And whilst I sometimes entertain myself with such thoughts as these, I feel a secret joy springing in my soul, and whispering to me, if there be so much love in a drop, in a beam, in a creature, there must sure be infinitely more in all respects in the ocean, in the sun, in God himself. I find all these good desires, and cares in myself swallowed up by the discovery of an object which is all goodness and omnipotence, and infinitely wise and almighty goodness; and a ravishing sight of all things already lying in his tender arms and sacred embraces; who in his sovereign and incomprehensible wisdom hath still been conducting them through all their various intricacies for a greater good and glory.

I shall now proceed directly to the proof of this great point and hypothesis; and show the certainty and necessity of it from the ground and foundation of truth, the holy Scripture itself, which abounds with confirmations of it, and would do so much more if exactly and fairly translated.

## CHAPTER I.

The first proof of this Hypothesis from Scripture.

The will of God that all shall be saved. And the Efficacy of that Will.

THE Apostle Paul exhorting to prayers for all men, urgeth and backs his exhortation upon this ground, that "this is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," *1 Tim. ii. 3*.

The letter of this text is full and express. God will have *all* men to be saved; and should we press it, there are almost as many arguments as words in it. For

1. It is not said, he *would* have all men to be saved, by his good-will; but he *will* have all men to be saved. It is a *will of authority* and sovereignty, of *supreme sovereignty*.

2. It is an *immanent, permanent, a fixed, a determinate* act of his will, not *transient* nor *revocable*: he *will* have all men to be saved.

3. He so wills the *end* as withal he wills all *necessary means* leading to it: he will have all men to be saved and *come to the knowledge of the truth*. There is no man is or can be sanctified or saved without the knowledge of the truth. God wills this therefore that they be saved, and that this means of salvation shall pass upon them.

4. This will hath its *ground* in the property of *God's nature*, this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. Thence it derives itself, where these words our Saviour



are not to be restrained to *the elect*, for that would not carry forth a will to save all men; this therefore is to be taken in the same latitude and *extent* with other places where he is called "the Saviour of all men." Chap. iv. 10. And God that "quickeneth all things," Chap. vi. 13. And our Saviour tells us, "all things live to God," Luke xx. 38, and he is called "the God of the spirits of all flesh." Numb. xvi. 22. And mark you, who is this Saviour? It is *God*, not only Christ, for of him he speaketh distinctly afterwards; but *the God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

5. Upon this account he said, this office of praying for all men, "is acceptable before God" our Saviour, which is not meant of a *simple acceptance*, as every good work is acceptable, but *by way of eminence*, this compared with other good works is singularly, eminently, peculiarly acceptable. Now things are so said to be acceptable to men when they *suit their inclinations*, and *gratify their great design* that they are intent upon, and fall in with it: so doth this office of praying for and seeking the good, the spiritual good, the eternal good of all men. It falls in with God's great design, and tends to bring it forth into effect. When Job prayed for his friends, that had been very harsh upon him, God took it so well that he *turned Job's captivity* upon it, though God was purposed to restore Job, yet he takes the very nick of that time to do it, when Job prayed for his friends. I know what Calvin and other expositors generally say, to invalidate this argument, *De hominum generibus non Singulis personis sermo est*, and afterwards upon v. 6, of Christ giving himself a ransom for all, he said, *Particula Universalis semper ad hominum genera referri debet non ad personas*, viz. That this particle of universality ought always to be understood of all ranks or sort of men, not of all individuals; but giving no reason for it but his own judgment, or *ipse dixit*, I need not further concern myself with it, yet for the honour I bear the author, I shall give my reason why I take it otherwise, which is this.

The apostle doth not exhort to pray for *the office of magistracy*, abstracted from the *persons*, but for the persons of rulers, or of all in eminency, the persons in rule at that time, whether *Nero*, or any other as bad as he, and the subordinates under them as bad men as the world had any, (so much worse as they were obliged by him whom they represented to have been better;) these persons of men are the objects designed upon and recommended to the prayers of the churches; and on occasion thereof is the will of God produced. But now the reason holds for all men, as well as for these, these being as bad as any, and the very words of the text so carry the intentions: it is under the *Title of Man*, that kings must claim the benefit of this recommendation to the prayers of the Church for all men, and they come in the crowd of all men in God's willing their salvation as all, ver. 4, and which *all men* he will have saved.

Now if God wills the salvation of *Nero*, and his subordinate ministers which might be as bad as he, who besides the common sins of

inferior men, abuse that eminency in which they were placed of God, let us then bring home the argument. God by the apostle requires prayers to be offered up *for all men*, for kings and all in the eminency, or as the original word is, for all that are uppermost, whatever their title was; he declares he will have all men to be saved; the instance and practice in the then present case, falls upon *very notorious men*, as bad as any time ever afforded.

Now how is it fair (the state of the question being thus truly put,) to say that by these *all men* God intends not *singulos generum*, but *genera singulorum*, that he intends some of all ranks only, as a garland composed of divers sorts of flowers picked here and there? I grant when we come to election, God chooses oft-times the worst and unworthiest, but election, or the grace of election, is never so delivered in general terms, but exceeding special and restrained; many are called, but *few are chosen*; and, you see your calling, brethren, how that *not many wise men* after the flesh, *not many mighty*, *not many noble* are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, &c. Therefore this salvation, with reference to which God is called generally a Saviour, and wills that all men be saved, is of *another sort*, and upon *another score*, than that whereof the elect are peculiarly partakers, as we shall show in the sequel of this discourse; and therefore when we are required here to pray for all men, and seek their good, even their salvation, it is not in contradiction to this distinction that God hath made. It is *not to reverse* and after God's decrees whereby he hath given some the *pre-eminence*, and *double portion* above others, but it is a seeking that *salvation* for all which God hath *prepared* for them in his *own time and way*.

And surely if there was no salvation at all for some men, God would never employ his people to pray for all, for if the spirit be the framer, and inditer of the saints' prayers, and makes intercession in them, it is most consonant to the honour of that spirit to apprehend, that he knowing and searching the deep things of God, will make intercession in us according to that will; and so the Scripture expressly acquaints us, and that God knows the mind of the spirit in that intercession, that it clashes not with any council of his. Rom. viii. 27. Therefore this very command to pray for all men, especially backed with this reason (for God wills that all men be saved) is a strong argument that *there is a salvation in God to be issued out sooner or later, even for all men*; which is also more than strongly implied in the ascribing that title to God of being our Saviour, which I have shewed before, as it is to be understood generally, so also *actually*. For it is not said, he purposes, or inclines, or resolves to be a Saviour, but is a Saviour *in act*. For indeed all his works are finished to him from the foundation of the world, and we are *saved in him* before the notice of it comes to us, as the apostle saith, though it was a mystery and was hid in God till it was manifested by the gospel. So the salvation of all men

is a done thing with God, though it hath its proper seasons to be exhibited to the view and notice of men. I cannot imagine what can be further objected against so plain an evidence as this text affords, but an exception to the will whereby God wills that all men be saved; that it is *voluntas imperantis* not *voluntas agentis*, that God wills, that is, commands all men to attend the means of salvation, and that the Gospel be tendered to all. If this exposition doth not retrieve the evidence, I know not what can, but it must stand as a good proof for the hypothesis.

Now for answer to this, how weak a pretence such a cold desire of all men's salvation is to ground that praise and eulogy which is ascribed to God, when he is recognised as the Saviour in common, that will have all men to be saved, may appear by considering these particulars.

1. That this good-will resting here and proceeding no further than the propounding salvation to men, and putting them on the use of the means to attain the same, never yet saved any one soul, no not of the elect themselves, and,

2. God hath not been sparing to tell and instruct men, in this that they are dead in trespasses and sins, and without Christ *they can do nothing*, and that every good and perfect gift *comes down from above*, that they must be *born again*, born of the Spirit, that faith itself whereby we receive all, is the gift of God; therefore the will of God that all men be saved cannot rest, cannot be shut up in such strait powerless bounds of commanding, and setting them upon the use of means to open their own blind eyes, and change their own naughty hearts. Hear what St. James saith of things more in the power of men themselves than these things are, which are not in the least, nor even were in the power of creature, Jam. ii. 15, 16: "If any see a brother or sister naked, and destitute of daily food: and one of you say to them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed, and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful for the body; what doth it profit?" Yet men may work, and by their labour in some cases earn what they need for these temporal things, but there is no possibility of recovering ourselves to life, and saving our own souls by any power of nature, or the law, or by the letter of the Gospel. Therefore God's will that all men be saved, rests not in such things as these, in pitying men, and wishing it better with them; this is not a love for *Omnipotency*, this is not a good-will for Him that is the *God of grace*, that is love itself; this were less than the love of the Samaritan to the wounded traveller; nay, for ought I know, than the love of the priest, or the Levite that passed by him; they had as much love as this. God is an eternal act of goodness, love, and sweetness, that carries his effect and end eternally in himself, and though there be a process in the discovery of this love to us, yet in its first and eternal emanation and motion, (if we may so speak) he is in the term of his motion. For he hath and possesseth the term eternally in himself, and whom he loves, *he loves to the end*, loves

fully, perfectly, furnishing and supplying all things to the end of his love richly, freely, entirely, out of himself, though he enriches, embellishes this his work, this his love, with all the riches, the fulness, the *variety*, the darkest, the subtlest contrariety of the fall, the curse, and wrath, yet those contraries tempered, subdued, reconciled, all to a most delightful, blissful harmony in the close.

3. The *will* of God, and his *work* are one, God wills nothing but he works it, who "worketh all things after the council of his own will," Eph. i. 11; for he wills nothing but with counsel, though he go for no counsel out of himself, but his own will is his counsel; but the meaning is, that every thing that God wills, stands upon grounds of the most absolute wisdom and prudence; that if a council were called of all creatures, nay, of all the attributes of God, better advice could not be given or taken; no wonder then if what is so deliberated and resolved be accordingly pursued to effect and put in execution, being the result of such a counsel, even the counsel of Him whose will is counsel, hath all counsel in it, that is so perfect that nothing can be added to it; therefore his word is his work, he spake and it was done, he is the rock, and his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. Deut. xxxii.

4. The sum of this evidence is, that God wills that all men be saved, this will is the will of an Omnipotent and sincere Agent, immanent and eternal will, eternally in act, that hath its end in its own power, yea in his arms and embraces, and neither can, nor could ever be resisted. And upon the account of this his will, he requires us to pray for and seek the spiritual and eternal good of all, which we cannot do as we ought, without the help of his spirit, who searcheth the deep things of God, and maketh intercession in us according to that will, and therefore would not move in any thing. (and so not in this desire of the salvation of all men) were it not according to the will of God, nor would the saints find acceptance with God in such requests, were they otherwise; which yet God hath declared they do, saying, "This is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour," who upon the account of willing the Salvation of all men, is recognised by this title of *Saviour*, the common Saviour. So much for this text, this is the first witness.

## CHAPTER II

Farther Evidence of this Hypothesis, from the Consideration of the Unity of God.

THE following verses will make further evidence to us of this truth, "for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, a testimony, for its proper times," for so the words are rather to be read, than as in our translation.

I intended first to produce what evidence might be afforded from plain texts and authorities, before I came to the argumentative texts



and deductions, and to have drawn forth my proofs in this order; first to show how God the Father stands engaged and affected in this cause, and then Christ the Son and Mediator. But for as much as these verses follow upon the former, and both receive lustre from them, as also reflect back a lustre upon them, let us without adjourning them to another place and time, hear their evidence presently.

1. We have the unity of God making evidence in this cause, there is one God; "*for there is one God.*"

2. The unity of the Mediator; "and there is one Mediator between God and men, who gave himself," &c.

3. The extent and universality of his ransom; which was *for every man*.

4. A tacit objection obviated and prevented, from the apprehended novelty of this truth, not apprehended in any times heretofore.

I. To begin with the first, the unity of God; ("*for there is one God.*") Why is this brought? The question may be, whether to engage us to pray for all men, or whether to prove that he will have all men to be saved, or whether for both these ends?

I shall not lose time to dispute it, but if it prove the latter, viz. for that God will have all men to be saved, then it *ex abundanti*, and into the bargain proves and engages to the duty of praying for all men. Now this will appear in the opening the force of this argument, "*for there is one God,*" which we may get some knowledge of from other places where this argument is used, as Rom. iii. 29, is he the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? yes, of the Gentiles also, "*seeing it is one God that justifieth the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.*" We may read the words thus, Is there a God of the Jews only, or have the Jews only a God, have not the Gentiles a God also? yea, sure, and the same God; and therefore the apostle concludes the same justification to be extended to the one as to the other. So likewise, Gal. iii. 20, when the apostle would show that the law, which was 430 years from the promise, cannot disannul or make void the promise made so long before, useth this argument, *that God is one*. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made, and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator; now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one." In both these places the apostle riseth up to a consideration of God in his supreme and absolute unity above law or Mediator, or any division of people or seeds founded thereon. In which absoluteness God is not obliged to give any account of himself, or any of his matters, may do with his own what he will. And this absoluteness and supremacy of his will is so exercised by him, not as by the tyrants of this world, to the enthralling, oppressing, to the hurt or hindrance of his creatures, but to the relief and highest security of them; and cannot be otherwise, from his nature, that is goodness itself, and is *ultimum refugium*, the last and most sure retreat and refuge of the

creature, when it feels itself lost all other ways, as that which will raise it again.

When I say this unity and absoluteness of God transcends the consideration of a Mediator, as well as the law, I desire to be understood in no other sense than the Scripture itself speaks, which is a qualified sense, viz. as the Mediator supposes a breach and distance between God and man, by reason of sin, not otherwise; for so the apostle intimates, when he saith the law was so long after the promise, and was added because of transgression, and ordained in the hand of a Mediator. Now a Mediator is not of one, but God in the absoluteness of his first and original grace went forth to man in Christ, as Christ was the head of all men, before and above all consideration of Christ as a Mediator of atonement, or any need thereof; and there the seed was but one, not divided; and he, even God, was one, and alone bearing the same relation, the same love to all: the splitting and dividing them, making some the vessels of mercy and election, others of wrath by reprobation; which way soever persons understand it, was subordinate counsel and design for the illustration of his ultimate glory.

To clear this, let us consider the oneness of God, what it is, and what it imports. One is *pars numeri*, a part of number, many units make a number, and one is *fons numeri*, the fountain of number, the *principium enumerationis*, the beginning of number. God is not only one so, but he is both the beginning and total sum of all, he is one and alone, and there is none besides him; but he is a great one, he is the one that is all, that gathers and takes in all, that binds up all in one, and is one in all, and makes all one, as love doth, which is called the bond of perfectness. His oneness is the soul that diffuseth itself through the whole, through all the parts, and is *toto in toto* and *toto in qualibet parte*, entire in the whole, and in every part, making thereby many members to be one body, as in the Godhead there are three persons, yet these three are one, as in the divine essence there are several attributes, yet they are all one, there is one mind, one spirit in them all: so in his counsels and works this oneness is a quintessence, a result, a spirit of glory that riseth out of them all, comprehends them all, is the crown and perfection of them all.

1. As to instance in those varieties and seeming contrarieties that are in the ways and works of God, wherein the Scriptures show a harmony and unity of counsel and design, as the law and grace, what more differing, what more contrary the apprehension of man? The law entered, saith the apostle, that sin might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, &c. Rom. v. 21.

Here are three pair of contraries, the law and grace, sin and righteousness, death and life; here are two contrary works, sin abounding, grace superabounding; here are two contrary ends, sin reigning to death, grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal

life; yet behold here the unity of the counsel and design, the dark scene of the law and sin, and death, is subordinate to the light; and for the illustration of it, grace gets above the law, righteousness riseth above sin, eternal life abolishes death, and so the design and counsel of God in this conflict and combat, clears up into a design and counsel of highest love and pleasure.

You will say the fruit and advantage of this counsel redounds only to the elect. I grant it as first fruits; we shall reach further by degrees; this being but a part of the whole of his counsels, yet it proves the unity of the counsel thus far; for you may remember we told you this unity is as the soul, that is entire in the whole, and entire in every part; the entireness in the parts were nothing, if it were not also in the whole, which if it be a truth, will appear at length.

2. The next instance I shall bring, is of the Jews and Gentiles, which division takes in the whole world, all either being Jews or Gentiles. God first appropriated the Jews, and left out the Gentiles; then he takes in the Gentiles and casts off the Jews, concluding them in unbelief, as the Gentiles had been concluded in unbelief before. As touching the law and its privileges, whereby God had signalized the Jews, and carried them up into an eminency and singularity of favour, the Gentiles were enemies, they grudged and grumbled at it, and envied them.

As to the Gospel, whereby the Gentiles got the start (the last were first) the Jews were enemies for their sakes: thus by turns, all, both Jews and Gentiles, are concluded under sin and unbelief; but what is the design of all? It is a great mystery the apostle confesses when he opens it, wherein the depths and riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God lie fair to be seen, from Rom. xi. 25.

1. This is but for a time, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, that blindness is happened to Israel, which gives light to all the subordinate wills, counsels, and dispensations of God; they are bounded and limited within a certain space and period; nothing runs out beyond time, but that which is God's ultimate scope and highest end of the whole, as shall be shown in its place; this is the first qualification of this dark scene of the Jews; rejection is but for a time, and when that time is run out, then all Israel shall be saved, as verse 26: and then,

2. Verse 28. Though as touching this dispensation of the Gospel, the Jews are enemies upon the Gentiles' account, yet there is an higher and more original grace, within the verge whereof they are, and that is the election, as touching which, they are beloved for their fathers' sake; which by the way acquaints us, that the present dispensation of the Gospel measures not out to us all the grace that is in God: there is a surplusage, a reserve behind to be manifested in its own proper time, as the apostle speaks in this place of Timothy which we are upon.

3. The apostle proceeds, "for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." The Jews had sufficiently forfeited all, but God will be like himself, he loved the fathers,

and he will not cut off the children for ever. And was not Adam the son of God; and are not all men Adam's children? did not God make Adam in his own image, make paradise for Adam, and gave him dominion over all the works of his hands? Did God begin thus with Adam, as well as ever he did with Abraham, and shall he not end as sweetly? Shall not the gifts and calling of God here be without repentance, as well as in the case of the Jews?

4. The apostle rises yet higher, and makes the present unbelief of the Jews an argument for their future restoration, ver. 30, 31. "Whereas the Gentiles in times past have not believed, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." What a soul or spirit of unity is this, running through all the dispensations and works of God, that out of such contraries as faith and unbelief, mercy and rejection works out the same end of mercy, mercy to the Gentiles through the Jews' unbelief, mercy to the Jews through the faith and mercy of the Gentiles.

5. The best is behind, which is the light of the whole piece, resulting from the several varieties in it, ver. 32. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," where the *all* that are the lump in unbelief are not the Jews only, but *both* people; for of the Jews he had said, *blindness in part is happened to Israel*, i. e. the two tribes and some scattered parcels of the rest; for the generality of the ten tribes were never tried with the Gospel; therefore in the latter place the *all* are both Jews and Gentiles; God will have mercy upon them all, when "God remembers his mercy and truth to the house of Israel, then all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." Ps. xcvi. 3. If this reach not to our grand purpose as the former instance it proves it by parts.

III. My third instance may carry us a little further: it is of vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour. Contrary things cannot well be imagined. 2 Tim. ii. 20. "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour and some to dishonour." The apostle before reflects on dangerous doctrines, and the broachers of them, teaching that the resurrection is past already to the overthrowing of the faith of some. What a jar is this in the Church of God? how shall this be reduced, reconciled, subdued, to any good concord and harmony? The apostle is larger than to give out at this difficulty: there is an expedient for this, and that is, there is a great house hath divers and differing vessels for worth and use. But were it not better there were but one sort? consider the allusion, and then answer it. While there are mean offices to be done, dirty hands are for dirty work, and these scullions make the vessels of gold and silver bright, these wooden and earthen vessels carry out the dirt, and excuse the vessels of gold and silver; but when all the dirty work is over, and



all the filth carried out and purged, then it will be time to find fault with the vessels of wood and earth, that all may become vessels of gold and silver, and not before.

We see by this Scripture that the house of God is very great, and there are in it vessels of several values and uses, vessels of gold and silver, wood and earth; the vessels of wood and earth are vessels of the house, of the great house, as well as those of gold and silver, though not alike precious, nor to uses so honourable; but they have an unity in relation to the house, which is all the stress. I put this place to.

But if we rise hence to the unity of the Master of this great house, it will give more countenance to our argument.

*God is one.* All men, reprobates as they are, called as well as elect, share in relation to this one God, have one and the self-same God; the elect have not one God, and the reprobate another, but one God is God of them both. It is an argument God uses in Mal. ii. 10, against oppression of one another: "Have not we all one Father? hath not one God created us?" Yea, the same good, and kind, and merciful God and Father made all. So the apostle to the Ephesians, chap. iv. 6, to conclude the argument to unity, brings in "this one God and Father of all," which though applied there to believers, as the former place in Malachi is to the Jews, yet it is true of all men, God is the God and Father of all men. And doth that afford no comfort and hope to men? It is the great and crowning joy of the New Jerusalem, that God himself shall be with them, and be their God: "And I will be your God," in the new covenant, "and you shall be my people." I grant God is especially and peculiarly the God of believers, yet he is the God of all men: believers eminently have the present actual fruit and comfort of it; but is God the God of any, and is there not a comfort and hope in it, first or last? "Ye are of your father the devil," saith Christ to the Jews, that sought to kill him in that image; in that spirit they were of the devil, yet God's right in them cannot be lost. God is not the Father of sin, though of the sinner, he is the God and Father of sinners, though not as sinners, but as his creatures, and in that rank of creatures, men: ("who make of one blood all nations of men," as Acts xvii. 26.) And the very heathen by the light of nature, did lay claim to him as his offspring: and the Holy Ghost allows it, saying, "Moreover he is not far from every one of us;" though we be far in our minds from him, yet there is such a rooted hope towards God in the very worst of men, except such who are under the judicial stroke of despair, which is also in its time to vanish, that they promise themselves mercy from it, though they know not why, nor are sensible, as they should be, of their forfeiture.

2. The relation that this one God bears to men, was original and antecedent to sin; there was a relation between God and man before sin entered; sin is of a later date than that relation. We read in Genesis i. that God made man and all things else good, exceeding good; when God reviewed every

day's work, he saw it good. Good then hath the start of evil, the precedence of it, it is the elder, and though God made but one man, yet that one man was all; as we all sinned and fell in him, so we all were made in the image of God in him; we were all crowned with glory and honour in him, with the favour and love of God. This is no strain; the Scripture saith, Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek, though then in his father Abraham's loins, and not brought forth of several ages afterwards. Now therefore turn your eye, and see how God begun with man, how concerned for him, calling a council about making him: "Let us make man." With what a hand of art and skill he formed him curiously, fearfully, wonderfully; how being so formed, he breathed into him the breath of life, the lives of all the creatures, vegetative, sensitive, rational, and angelic, making him truly an abstract and compendium of the whole, a microcosm; how he stampt his own image upon him, and sealed him for himself, for his own converse and society: how he arrayed him with the robes of his own sovereignty, making him next himself, lord of all his works in the lower world: how he accommodated him, and made a garden of pleasure for him, stored with all delicious fruits, and so tender of his full satisfaction and content, that he considered his being alone, before he considered it himself, and that nothing might be wanting, made him a helpmeet for him, giving him power by that means to increase and propagate himself into a multitude, as ample as might balance all other species.

Now was there love in all this or no? This was not to Adam alone, but to every one of us in him. I say, were these acts of love, or did God only make a flourish, and lay a snare for man, that forfeiting all these, he might be more miserable than if he had never been? If you say it was love, as I see not how it can be avoided, then did you think God began thus with man to end in a tempest? A tempest ensued, I grant, and lies still upon the greatest part of mankind, and a worse is reserved for them, as a just recompense of their deeds, even a fiery indignation, which shall destroy the adversary, as the apostle speaks, and make an end of the flesh, and so of sin, which what it means may be showed in its place.

But shall that bright sun of favour and love, that arose so splendidly on man, set in an everlasting cloud? (Ps. lxxvii. 8-10,) shall all those thoughts of God, whereof he gave an earnest to man in his first creation, perish? Shall the Lord lose his everlasting possession for ever! The same that is said of Christ, may be said of man in his root, and so of all men. The Lord possessed them in the beginning of his ways; the Lord had *livery* and *seisin* of them when there was no strange God among them, before ever sin, or law, whereby sin is imputed, did enter. Adam was first formed, saith the apostle, then Eve, and the man was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. The woman stands in Scripture for the natural principle, or fleshly image.

Sin, therefore, where it is founded, there it is also confounded, condemned to the flesh, and so alone poor fleshy man comes to know salvation through the sorrow of child-bearing, either born by Christ for us, which is the privilege of believers, or bearing their own iniquity as all others must do, to the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit, which is the seed, may rise. But before the woman was thus deceived, upon what amicable terms was God and Adam! How sweetly, as two that were perfectly agreed, did they walk together! Now God is one, and in one mind, though he may change his way, and use a suitable variety in that, yet if he begin in love, as here he did, surely he will not end in wrath; though the creature may apprehend God hath done with him, and will be merciful no more; yet it is not so, for as he is *Alpha*, so is he *Omega*; if his love were the first, certain it shall be last also: for who shall get the upper hand of that love which is God himself?

3. This oneness of God imports, that his wrath and love is one, but of this when we come to that Scripture where God is recognized by the name of love.

### CHAPTER III.

Pursuing the same Text. An Argument from the Unity of the Mediator.

WE come to the next words, which afford further evidence: "One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Here again men are recapitulated and headed in one, who is the Mediator of reconciliation, and of all communication of good from God to man, in whom, as such, all men have joint and equal interest. And the apostle saying "there is one Mediator of God and man," seemeth to import that originally the case is alike with all men, and so it is; all are children of wrath by nature, one as well as another, and he that pleads the cause of the elect, and the propitiation for their sins, he is the advocate of the rest also: and therefore if the cause of the elect succeeds and goes so well in his hands, it affords grounds of hope for the other also.

This unity of the Mediator is often reflected on, though in other words, as "one Lord," Eph. iv. 5; and "one head," Eph. i. 10. As was hinted before, touching which, this especially is to be further noted; that these *all* things here recapitulated, are distributively reflected on; both which are in heaven and which are on earth; which is not a local distribution, or a distribution of place, but of quality and condition. All the elect, and called ones are heavenly ones, 1 Cor. xv. The rest are earthly in this present state, yet these, as well as the others, are recapitulated or re-headed again in Christ, which relates to the first heading of them; which must also have been in *him*, for there was no other head of angels, or men originally, but He; he was that *Arche*, that head, which the fallen angels kept not, which our translators

render their first state, but it may as well be rendered their beginning or head, from which they departed by disobedience, and fell.

Now mark here two things:

1. The argument the apostle is upon. And,

2. The aptness of the terms of the *medium* by which he would evince it. The argument is here praying for all men, the ground, God will have all men to be saved, the terms are general, all men are to be prayed for, not the elect only, but all men; none excepted in this place, nor in 1 John v. 16, only the sin unto death, which is not enjoined to be prayed for. Of that more hereafter.

2. Observe the validity of the terms of the *medium*: there is one God, that is unto all men still, all men have one God, an interest in this one God, and one Mediator between God and men; not between God and the elect, but between God and men. All that are men, (he is one, the Mediator between God and men): and,

Lastly, In the Mediator-ship of our Saviour, not the God-head, but the man-hood is reflected on, to suit the argument to pray for all men; the man Christ Jesus, this one Mediator, engages us to it.

The argument arising from the whole to the point in hand is this, that through the unity of the Mediator, all men are under a gracious counsel and design of salvation. We have seen before, how they all stand related to one God, as the creatures of that one God. God is the God of all men, but now they are nearer related, God is in Christ, become in personal union with the nature of man, in which all men have a common and joint interest, and so the persons of men, of all men, are in this their common representative, married to God; this is made out by these particulars.

1. God in Christ, hath espoused the nature of man, not the person of any man, but the nature, the seed of the woman; this reflects honour and privilege upon all that have interest in that nature. Gen. ix. 6, we read, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man." This is said after man was fallen, after that image was defaced, after that the old world was destroyed by the flood, for the lewdness and wickedness of it; yet that image of God, stamped on man in his creation, though but one man ever wore it in its freshness and beauty, pleads a privilege, becomes a security to all his fallen race, against violence to be offered to them. Sure then this relation, this union of our nature with God hypothetically in Christ, can never lose its force, its efficacy, but must stand in force for a higher security. The death of the body is but a prick of a pin to eternal death; shall God be so tender of man, to secure him from the less, and shall he not secure him much rather from the greater evil? Shall the first consideration and the relation of a creature, and the created image operate so far, and shall not this father and higher relation of the essential image to our conjugal union, operate much stronger to the advantage of all the seed?

Col. i. 15. Next to the image of God, we



and the first-born of every creature, or of the whole creation, which must necessarily at least take in all men; the other creatures being virtually in man. But I say they are put together, the image of the invisible God and the *first-born* of every creature, that the glory of the latter may shine forth by the former, and might reflect glory on the whole creation round about: so that there is no man but this first-born is in him, for every creature by that Scripture hath his first-born, and that first-born is Christ, the image of the invisible God. The first-born of every creature, is not only the first-born of new creatures; the new creature implies a first creation before, and this first creature, nature, was found first in Christ, and he is the first-born in it, as well as the first begotten from the dead, and by his mediation other creatures are brought forth; so that Christ is the Mediator of the creation, the first creation as well as the new creation; and all men in their first creation, stand related to Christ as brethren: the first-born is the most worthy, and hath the double portion, is the excellency of dignity and of power, opens the womb, but they that come after have the same father, and issue out of the same womb.

The first-born in the first place, the other afterwards, which order of succession in the same progeny, infers not such a privilege and dignity to the first, as leaves the following race wholly abandoned and rejected, but at least in the families of men who have not enough to maintain the honour of their name; they must be recommended to the kindness and care of the first-born, which in this case, we may be secure of, though the father of this first-born is able to bless and provide most bountifully for his latter children, which all men you see are by their first creation, for we are also *his offspring*, as sings the poet, and the apostle disallows it not.

But it will be said this title fails, and this relation is dissolved and past away in Christ; men can claim nothing by it.

*Answer.* It is rather changed and swallowed up of a better to them that are new creatures in Christ, which is the truest sense of those words, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, all old things are past away," as the law is past away to those that are under grace; but the relation of creatures remains between God and all men, and will do so eternally; believers are therefore said to be a kind of first fruits of his creatures, which is in comparison with other men that are not believers; and we know what the apostle saith, "If the first-fruit be holy, the lump also is holy," and as the relation holds to God, so to Christ, if he be the first-born of every creature, all men are upon that account related unto Christ, and though there be a great difference between the first-fruits and other men, much more between the first-born and unregenerate men; yet there cannot be any privilege growing from hence, even to the worst of men, though while they are in unbelief and unregeneracy, they have no knowledge or sense of it. If this kindred, as I may call it, operates nothing, why doth the

Lord own a philanthropy? How is it that the Lord lays such laws upon men, as on Israel for their poor brother, and under the New Testament, "that he that provides not for his family (not restraining it to believers) hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The new creation is a design, an improvement, advanced upon the first creation; it is the first title improved by a better, not destroyed but clothed upon, as the apostle speaks, as the tabernacle was housed in the temple; and so it must be in whomsoever are saved. Thus we see what light these words afford to our present inquiry. There is one Mediator.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Christ a Ransom for all, a Testimony for its Proper Season.

WE come to the next, which relates to a new creation, "who gave himself a ransom for all." In this place, and upon this argument, to engage us to pray for all men, and that upon the following grounds, that God will have all men to be saved (can signify no less than general redemption) so far as that the price is laid down for all men, such a price as justice required, such as God accepted: for it is an actual ransom, which it could not have been called if the creditor had not been agreed, and declared himself satisfied therewith (a testimony for its proper time to be declared for all.) This ransom for all, is that which the mystical Jews can no more bear now, than the literal Jews could bear of the Gentiles to be taken into the covenant of Abraham, which might be the reason that the apostle closely insinuates in those words, (a testimony for its own proper times) as if he foresaw by the spirit, how the elder brother would grudge that the prodigal, after all his rambling, should find at last such a welcome entertainment; but yet the Scriptures of the New Testament are not wholly silent in other places touching this, Tit. ii. 11; chap. iii. 4; 1 Tim. iii. 10; Rom. 5. 18; 1 John ii. 2. "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." A text so worded, with *a not only, and the whole world*, as if the Spirit had purposely consulted to obviate and prevent all clippings of it.

But to come to the argument: from hence it will be said, what, though Christ gives himself a ransom for all, we see yet all men, nay, the greatest part of men, have no benefit by it, but live and die unreconciled to God? It is confessed, and it is moreover certain, there is no other name given under heaven for men to be saved by: but because this redemption, this ransom operates not in the present time, have we authority to say it never shall? The blood of Christ never loses its virtue. The covenant with Abraham hath lain dead this seventeen hundred years and more, with the body of that nation, but yet it shall awake and work afresh, for the apostle saith, they

are beloved for their fathers' sake, and Christ saith, though Israel be not gathered, i. e. in the present time, yet a time is coming, as if he should say, when I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord. Is. xlix. 5. He had said in the verse before, by way of objection, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength in vain, and for nought, but he answers himself, "Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." The apostle upon the argument of the resurrection, which he extends to all men, though not to all at first, but each in their order, and that making alive would be small comfort, if it were only a raising them to judgment, looks on it as so harsh a consequence, that Christ should die in vain, that he makes an argument of it: and I confess it is so harsh an hypothesis, that Christ should give himself a ransom for all, and that neither first nor last, the greatest part of men should have the fruit of it, that is, be set free by it, that without better reason than I yet see, I cannot admit it. He that forbids Israel to detain the wages of the hireling past the end of the day, will not surely deny Christ the price of his blood: but before he give up the kingdom, which is the end of his day, as Mediator, he shall see the full travail of his soul, and be satisfied. So that here we see man indefinitely designed for the advantages of this mediation, which is instituted between God and man, not between God and the elect, but between God and man: now an indefinite is equal to an universal. Then,

4. We see in executing this mediation, Christ gave himself a ransom for all, not restraining it to a part.

There are two more particulars which lie couched in this text.

1. That this ransom is that which all men have a share and interest in; for he gave himself, who was a public person, that took the nature of man; in which all men have joint interest; not the person of any man, not the property of any man; so that it was the life of the world that was offered up in sacrifice, the life of man in the person of the Son of God, ennobled and made valuable by the union, to be a ransom for all men; "therefore," saith the apostle, "if one died for all, then were all dead;" they were dead *criminally* in Adam, they were dead *penally* in Christ, else how could believers reckon themselves dead in him, if his death were not their death, sacramentally, as I may say, and so the death of all, though all receive it not, apprehended it not: therefore Christ saith, "The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

2. The second thing is the effect of this transaction, "and gave himself a ransom for all;" which is an advantage and benefit so large, so extensive, as is too great for the present faith of men; therefore it is said to be "a testimony for its proper times" or seasons, and what is the meaning of that? but although this extent of the ransom appear not now, and so the testimony of it cannot be received, which may be the reason why we have been so dark in it, yet there shall be times wherein it shall appear; and then, as is said of the

vision, it shall be made plain upon tables, that he may run that reads it; in the mean time it is a mystery sealed up with a seal of secrecy, as that which the seven thunders uttered was, till the sounding of the seven trumpets; and as the vision of Christ's glory in the mount of transfiguration, which was enjoined to be told to no man till Christ should be risen from the dead, because Christ was yet in a state of humiliation: so the world is yet in an unreconciled state, and the time for this reconciliation to operate upon all, is not yet come, but only upon the elect; the rest as we shall see will follow in their order.

## CHAPTER V.

An Argument from 1 Tim. iv. 10. God a Saviour of all, but in a more especial manner of them that believe the Gospel.

My second proof is from 1 Tim. iv. 10, where God is said to be the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe. The words are these; "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men," &c. I thought to have past by this Scripture, for that it may be apprehended to refer only to temporal salvation, but the context carries it further, for ver. 8, he speaks of the promise of this life, and that which is to come, which is annexed to godliness, and then ver. 9, saith, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, which is the same eulogy that he ushers in the Gospel with, chap. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am chief;" where undoubtedly he speaks of eternal salvation. The question is, what this *μαλιστα* imports, chiefly of them that believe; wherein it is, that some, even those that believe, have the advantage of the rest of men. Before we look farther, let us take what the place affords: we read, ver. 8, that godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come; this is the advantage of believers above other men that are saved, which is commonly taken for the advantages of this world, but without ground; for the text contradicts this exception; for then what means the labour of the apostles, and their suffering reproach, if they had the promise of this life in that sense? It was a promise not performed to them who yet were eminent in godliness; therefore the promise of the life, (now) is such as Christ promises to them that forsake father and mother, house and lands for his sake, that they shall have an hundred fold in the present time with persecution. This hundred fold, with persecution is in the spirit, and can be no otherwise, Mark x. 30. This promise they that believe not are deprived of, which is sufficient to ground that difference which the Greek word *μαλιστα* imports, in God's being the Saviour chiefly of them that believe that he is their Saviour.

They have the promise of the life that now



is, the others must stay for it; but they that believe are saved already, as unbelievers are condemned already, John iii. 18, yet God is the Saviour of all men; how this is, cannot be better expressed than by the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 22, where he speaking of the resurrection, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every one in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming, then cometh the end." Where we have three seasons in which the resurrection is accomplished: First, in the rising of Christ the first fruits of the elect or believers; secondly, in the resurrection of believers; that are, as James saith, a kind of first-fruits of his creatures. Then,

Thirdly and lastly, in the resurrection of the rest of men, for so and in this order shall the resurrection proceed: the dead in Christ shall rise first, and those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him, not all the dead, but those that sleep in Jesus, so that great is the odds for believers above other men, for they are saved in the present time, or have the promise of the life that now is; that life in the spirit which is an hundred-fold beyond all the pleasures of sin, or bare temporal enjoyments of natural men. Then when they die they sleep in Jesus, in his bosom, until the resurrection; not that their souls sleep, or are sealed up in an inactivity, as their bodies in their graves; but they rest sweetly, as in the sweetest sleep from all that molested them here, both sin and sorrow, and are with Christ in Paradise.

And then thirdly, at Christ's coming their bodies are raised too, and they enjoy the kingdom with him during his whole reign, which the rest of men are excluded from, being not raised, as the creation is not delivered till the sons of God are manifested, Rom. viii. 19, 21, but answerably in a way of opposition and contradistinction; the rest of men, they are dead while they live, they go to hell when they die, and are not saved or made alive till Christ's kingdom on earth hath its accomplishment, which is called *the end*; "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."

From all that hath been said, it appears, that this term, *manica* is not quiescent, idle, or insignificant, but importing a great difference between believers and others: yet not excluding the rest altogether, or for ever from salvation; nay, it strongly implies the contrary, it implies, that all are or must be saved in one degree or another, at one time or another.

## CHAPTER VI.

Objections against this Hypothesis Answered.

But this truth (it is said) it shall prove after all is considered that may be alleged in the case) will pass the most stringent when we shall have seen these harsh phenomena, which this assertion appears to be attended

with; which province therefore might seem justly to challenge the precedency in this disquisition. I shall begin,

*Object. 1.* Shall all men be saved? What will become of the justice of God and his wrath against sin? This doctrine will take off all restraint from sinners, all encouragement to strict walking: if all should be saved, who would deny his flesh its cravings, its sensual satisfaction?

*Answer, 1.* This objection proceeds upon a grand mistake, if it be not wilful, viz. that the grace of God is a blind injudicious softness: which is a weakness in men, and is not once to be imagined of God, who is wisdom, truth, and holiness itself, and all these in highest consistency and harmony with grace and love, and even in the running over of his heart to his special favourites, all is under the conduct and management of highest prudence and wisdom. Eph. i. 8.

2. The Scriptures are not only plentiful in threatening, and denouncing death and wrath against sin, but in demonstrating to us,

1. The justice of this way of dealing with men, as wages is to a servant, "the wages of sin is death."

2. The naturalness and inevitableness of it, "that which a man soweth, that shall he also reap; be that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption," &c. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." Yea,

3. The coincidence of sin and punishment in the same term of death, "to be carnally minded is death."

That there is an hell after this life, is clear by the doctrine of our Saviour himself in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 23; Matth. v. 22-29; ch. x. 28; ch. xviii. 9, and that from Christ's tribunal "all men shall receive the things done in their bodies, whether good or bad." The apostle Paul, without any hesitancy affirms, 2 Cor. v. 10, and that there shall be an exact proportion in the punishment to the sin, many places of the New Testament prove, Matth. x. 15; xi. 21-24; Rev. xx. 12, 13.

*Object.* But you will say, If hell be admitted you give up the cause. How are they saved that are cast into hell, "which is a fire that shall never be quenched," Mark ix. 43-48, and called "everlasting fire" in many places?

*Answer.* Let him that denies hell take heed lest it be verified upon himself; we have as much for hell as we have for heaven, only it may be questioned whether we understand those terms "for ever," yea, "for ever and ever," and "everlasting," and "never to be quenched," aright. for as much as these terms are used of things that have an end, as of the ordinances of the law, "this is an ordinance for ever," Exod. xxvii. last and divers other places, which yet had an end in Christ; so the Lord threatens, "that his fury shall burn upon Jerusalem, and shall not be quenched." Jer. vii. 20. Yet what sweet promises were made to Jerusalem, and to that people afterwards; and after this long rejection they are under the promise of a gracious return still, therefore these terms are to be understood in a limited or qualified sense; and if the everlasting duration of hell without end have no

other ground but those terms, it is too weak a foundation to build such an assertion upon, as concludes and shuts up God for ever in wrath, never to come forth in the exercise of mercy to far the greatest part of his creatures.

It is granted, those terms, "for ever" and "everlasting," import a long time, as Israel's ordinances lasted till Christ came, which was two thousand years.

2. That may be said for ever, whose term of ending is not revealed when it shall be.

3. What is after this life in another world, may be said to be for ever.

4. What is commensurate with the duration of the kingdom of the Son as Mediator, till he gives up the kingdom, may be said to be for ever; so the servants of God and the Lamb shall reign for ever and ever in the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxii. 5, which yet is to be given up to the Father when all enemies are put down under the feet of Christ.

5. Eternal judgment may be so said in three other respects. 1. Of God the inflictor. 2. On the soul on which it is inflicted, which is immortal. 3. Of the full accomplishment of its end, the full declaration of his justice, and the final extermination and making an end of sin, Jer. xxiii. 19, and last; "Behold the whirlwind of the Lord goes forth with fury, a continual whirlwind, it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked; the fierce anger of the Lord shall not return until he hath done it, and until he hath performed the intents of his heart," &c. "So, verily, thou shalt not come out thence until thou hast paid the utmost farthing."

I know what is commonly pleaded, that sin being against an infinite Majesty, satisfaction cannot be made, but by a punishment infinite in duration.

But this strikes at the sufficiency of Christ's satisfaction, in which God hath shewed there is a mean of satisfaction, without infinite duration, and God is satisfied by that one sacrifice for the sin of the whole world, so that God wants not satisfaction; besides that, if he did, he should by this principle, be ever satisfying, but never satisfied.

It is most certain, though Christ hath laid down a sufficient ransom for the whole world (and so intended by him) wherein God's justice is made amends for all the breach of his law, and he may now be just in forgiving the greatest sins and sinners, yea the whole world without exception, yet they that are not by special grace drawn to believe and receive this atonement, that are not influenced by this grace to deny ungodliness, that are not regenerated and born anew by the Spirit of God; they have not the benefit and advantage of this ransom, but must bear their own iniquity, shall die in their sins, and be cast into hell, where body and soul shall suffer in proportion to their demerits, and not come out thence until they have paid the utmost farthing.

But by our Saviour's own mouth there will be a great difference between some and others, even in those that perish; and if it be more tolerable for some than others, then we may draw an argument from hence, for the

bounding the duration of the punishment of the damned, by the same rule of justice as proportions the degrees of punishment to the sin; for if the infiniteness of the Majesty offended, requires the punishment of the offender, infinite in duration, doth it not require it should be intensely exquisite also; therefore that infiniteness of the Majesty offended is not the rule; but the reception of the light of this Divine Majesty, where it hath been more or less, that is the rule; "for," so saith the apostle, "they that have sinned without law, shall be judged without law, and they that have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law, and they that sinned under the Gospel, and against the Gospel, shall have the hottest judgment of all." See Heb. x. 26-30. To shut up this matter there are two things in judgment that make it more or less tolerable; the intenseness of it, and the extent or duration of it. The furnace was commanded to be heated seven times hotter than ordinary, for the three children; that was the intenseness of the torment; now one or both of these must of necessity be understood in the tolerableness of Tyre and Sidon's judgment before Capernaum and Bethsaida; and if you say the former, that the heat of their fire is not so intense, you then yield the cause, for their sins were against an infinite Majesty, therefore if that were the rule and measure of the punishment, their punishment must be as intolerable as any others; yea, indeed as intolerable as an infinite God could make it; but the creature is not capable of such a wrath; for *quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientis*, a finite thing cannot hold an infinite, therefore they which are most enlightened, are capable of most wrath; which is the meaning of that passage, Ps. xc. 11, according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. A poor dull heathen who was never awakened to a sense of God, is not capable of that wrath that those are who have lived under the sun-shine of the Gospel. Therefore Christ took in more of the wrath of God than all men and angels put together could have done, because he took in the fulness of his love. He lay in his bosom and therefore he had a quicker and more exquisite sense of his wrath, and so they that sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of truth, O! what a fiery judgment is that which awaits them! for they have come near to God, they have tasted the good word of God, they have felt the sweetness of communion with God, (next to new-covenant communion) they have eaten and drank in his presence; how terrible will the sense of rejection be to such! Indeed, they that have the coldest hell will find it hot enough, yea, hotter than they can bear, without most great and extreme sense of torment, double to all the pleasures of sin, and of their own will, which have brought this torment on them; for this is the proportion and measure, Ex. xx. 4, 5; Jer. xvi. 18; xvii. 18; Rev. xviii. 6, and as for punishment so for reward, Is. xl. 2; lxi. 7. To conclude. In vain is it said, men shall be judged according to their works, and it shall be more tolerable for some than others, if the utmost



wrath, that an infinite God can inflict, shall be poured upon all the punished *ones*; and if not utmost, in respect of intention, then not endless, in respect of extension, but proportionable to their *works*.

## CHAPTER VII.

The Opening of that Scripture, 1 Pet. iii. 18-20, for the Further Illustrating of this Argument, and the Answer unto the Former Objection, that from Hell there is no Redemption.

THE words of the text, 1 Pet. iii. &c., are these: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, (that he might bring us to God) being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit: in which also going forth, he preached to the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was in preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water;" &c. Compare this Scripture with that which you will find chap. iv. ver. 6: "For this cause was the Gospel preached also (or even) to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." And if it be found that the Gospel is preached to the damned, and for this end, that through a judgment administered on the flesh, they must be brought forth to a life in the Spirit, as these Scriptures seem to hold forth; then not only is this objection answered, but the main assertion of universal grace is justified; for there can be no question of the possibility or probability of the salvation of other sinners, if the sinners of the old world be saved, and of sinners in the flesh, if the damned in hell be redeemed and fetched out from thence. For of these doth both of these texts speak: the former is without question, and the latter text being but six or seven verses removed from the former, may be presumed not to be alien in sense. But besides, it is clear the discourse is continued throughout these verses, and the argument not altered or changed, and therefore I shall spend no time to clear that which is so clear to any one that reads the text. All the question will be, what time this going forth of Christ to preach to the old world (who were now gone off the stage, and were only spirits uncloathed of their mortal bodies and in prison) was? whether while on earth before the flood came upon them and swept them away, or whether it were after our Saviour's death or resurrection, rather during those forty days before his ascension, answering the forty days and forty nights that it rained upon the earth: viz. whether this preaching was the preaching of Noah in his time, who is called the preacher of righteousness by this apostle, in his second epistle, chap. ii. 5, or of our Saviour in person? I confess I have formerly endeavoured to persuade myself upon that ground, viz. that Noah is so recognized, that it was Christ, in the spirit of his mediatory person and office, going forth in Noah, in the

days of warning before the flood, that was meant in the first quotation of this apostle, chap. iii. 19, but there are several particulars in that text, besides the cogent arguments in the latter text, chap. iv. 6, which have a manifest connexion and dependency with the former, and relation to it, which sways me to the contrary, and being in harmony with so many other texts of Scripture, makes it more than probable, that Christ carried the Gospel in person, to the spirits of the old world, after his resurrection, to judge and to save them: let us consider the particulars distinctly, in both texts:

1. It cannot be Noah, or his preaching, that is there meant, or Christ preaching in Noah; for the time, the state, the place, the auditory, the success, and other circumstances, all forbid such an interpretation.

1. The time was after our Saviour's suffering, that is plain, ver. 18, for Christ hath once suffered for sin, being put to death in the flesh, &c. It was after the days of our Saviour's flesh, but Noah's preaching was before his coming in the flesh; this is the first argument.

2. It was in the state of the life that he took up from the dead by the resurrection that he went forth and preached, which is called *spirit* in the end of ver. 18, in which he is said to go forth in ver. 19, which is not that state of spirit in which Christ was before he was incarnate; but it is the spiritual state of his humanity in the resurrection; that's a second argument. To which add, if the apostle had here made it his design to show, that Christ went forth in spirit before he took flesh, he might have instanced in all the prophets, and needed not to have taken such a leap over all their heads to the old world; he might have been furnished with instances nearer hand than Noah. Therefore this is a ministry of the person of Christ, of the spiritual state of his person in the resurrection; this is the preacher.

3. The place. The Greek words import a travel or journey to some distant place or region, being used afterwards, ver. 22, of this chapter, for his ascending to heaven. This is a travel to the place of the damned, where they are in prison, wherever that is. Whether that place of his descending to the utmost parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9, make any thing to this purpose, I shall not determine, but leave to be considered; but if this be so that Christ did withdraw from the converse of the living, to the place of the dead, then we have an account of our Saviour's time, from the resurrection to his ascension, whereof so little was bestowed in visits on his disciples, the time being taken up in evangelizing or preaching the Gospel to the dead, as chap. iv. 6, that which is called only preaching in the first place, chap. iii. 19, is in the latter called preaching the Gospel; in the first place a preaching to the spirits in prison, in the latter evangelizing to the dead. This was not the preaching of Noah in the flesh.

4. The auditors, who are not men in the flesh, but the dead in the latter place: and lest that should be taken metaphorically or mystically for the dead in trespasses and

sins only, it is over-ruled in the former place by the appellation of spirits, that is, such as had laid down the body, and were then those spirits in prison, such as were descended and sent to their own place, there to be kept in prison to the day of their judgment, which here seems to be the time of Christ's resurrection, which is the beginning of the day of judgment. For Christ's resurrection was the notice and assurance that was given to all men, of his being appointed to judge the world in righteousness, and of that day being come, Acts xvii. 31; Heb. ix. 27, which may answer the objection of the day of judgment being one continued day, which Heb. vi. 2, is called "the eternal judgment." So soon as men die they come to judgment, but there are special seasons for signal and eminent judgments. Yet all one judgment continued, and eternal in the spirit, though not alike manifest always, Rev. xv. 4. The time from Christ's resurrection to his ascension, was the time for the judgment of the old world; the oppositeness of which time may appear from hence, because now was the new world brought to light actually, which began from finishing of the judgment of the flood. That judgment was absolved in forty days from the resurrection of Christ. Now this preaching being to the dead properly, not metaphorically, not to men in the flesh, but to spirits in prison, cannot be the preaching of Noah, but must be the preaching of Christ to a world of men that were gone off the stage of this world. This is a fourth argument.

5. The success. Noah's preaching was fruitless; the old world was disobedient, and perished under his preaching; but there is a strong intimation, as if the preaching of Christ had better success, because it is said of this auditory, that they were some time disobedient, and as if now they were not; but this is not all, the fruit is plainly expressed in the latter place; for this cause the Gospel was preached even to them that were dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but that they might *live* according to God in the spirit. That work which the Gospel prevails for where it is received by faith, Christ in his risen state effects that by new accession of power he had received according to his own acknowledgment in several places. Matt. xxviii. 18; John xvii. 2.

And whether the "leading captivity captive," spoken of Eph. iv. at his ascension, and "giving gifts to men," even to the rebellious, those rebels of the old world, those giants that made war with heaven, "that the Lord God might dwell among them," Ps. lxxviii. may not look this way, I shall leave to be considered. It is usual among men, when kings are inaugurated or installed in their kingdoms, to open the prison doors, and set free the captives. This is a fifth argument, concluding against the preaching of Noah, to be the intent of the apostle, which is yet made stronger by the apostle in the first quotation of Peter, where speaking of the flood, as a baptism of *salvation* in the light side of it, though a baptism of *judgment* to the greater part, there being few, but only eight souls saved by water, he makes the *antitype* to be

the resurrection of Christ from the dead: who therefore must in a correspondent way *save* as well as *judge*, and especially we may be bold to conclude so, when the Scripture goes before us, and acquaints us with the ministry he exercised in person, in this risen state, and the subjects to whom he preached, and also the end of it, that they might not only be judged according to men in the flesh, but might live according to God in the spirit. The salvation now by this baptism, is an earnest of the universal salvation, according to the commission given him, or that he sees ready to be given him upon his suffering, at his resurrection, which is by himself said to be a *power* over all flesh, John xvii. 2, a term excluding all, or any exception or limitation. The place we shall reflect upon more particularly hereafter.

6. There are two or three other circumstances that will add to the clearing of this exposition, and take away some objections that may possibly lie in some minds against what hath been declared. As,

First, the adverb, *πότε*, or sometimes, applied to the disobedience of the old world, which shows their disobedience, and this preaching to them, not to be of the same time, and so not to be the preaching of Noah.

Again, the adverb *απαξ*, or once, that is applied to the expectation of the Lord's long-suffering, shows the expectation to have been of a former time antecedent to this preaching; and so it could not be the preaching of Noah, which did contemplate with that expectation again.

Thirdly, while Noah preached, and this long-suffering of God expected them, they were not spirits, but men in the body; and not in prison, but at liberty in this world; not dead, but alive in the flesh.

Fourthly, and so to obviate an objection, if the meaning had been, that Noah preached then to men in the flesh, who since that are now spirits in prison, would he not have as accurately distinguished the times of the one and the other, and have made it clear that they were not spirits in prison then, as he doth in the two places to distinguish their disobedience, and God's expecting their compliance from that time of this preaching, of which he treats, by the adverbs *ποτε* and *απαξ*.

Fifthly, that particle (also) chap. iv. 6, "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead," must needs mean the dead properly; being so over-ruled by the sense of the terms in the verse immediately preceding, where he speaks of Christ *ready*, viz. "now from his resurrection ready to judge the quick and the dead;" and then,

Lastly, What should the apostle mean by saying, the Gospel *was* preached in the *preterite*, if it were not that he spake of an action past, viz. in that forty days from the resurrection of our Saviour, to his ascension; for if he had intended and spake of the preaching of the Gospel to the mystical dead, that are living on earth, by the ministers of Christ, he would most probably, because most properly, have spoken in the present time (it is preached) for so then it was when he wrote, and



continues to this day, more or less: therefore it is most probable he spake of an action that was past, even the same that he had written of in the former chapter, which adds some further light and evidence to this exposition, and understanding of the text.

To conclude this text, and the evidence from it, let it be observed against the slighting of sin, and the judgment it brings on the sinner, that it was above two thousand years, by the computation of the best chronologers, that speak least, from the flood to the times of our Saviour: and all that time were the spirits of the old world in prison. What profit had they of six or seven hundred years spent in vanity, to lie three thousand years for it, as some of the earliest of them did, if they were delivered at the resurrection of Christ, or by the efficacy of his preaching to them that forty days after it before his ascension? And it is seventeen hundred years and more since that time, that the sinners of the new world have expected the fiery indignation; which how long it shall burn upon them in and during the reign of Christ in his kingdom, I see not how to determine: but the duration already, and the certainty of every one's receiving according to his work, by unimaginable decrees exceed the shortness and momentariness of the pleasures of sin, that are but for a season.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### An Argument drawn from the Mercy promised the Jews.

NEXT to the damned in hell is the case of the Jews on earth, for deplorableness both in respect of sin and misery. The *depth* of their misery is estimated by the *height* of their privileges, being once the only church and people of God, but now the most forlorn and wretched people on earth, and so have been seventeen hundred years and more; lying under rejection for that great sin of crucifying and rejecting Christ, which was done by their fathers, and is owned and not repented of by their children to this day; not to speak of the ten tribes, which from the days of Sallmanezar were carried captive, and remain an unknown nation, without prince or government to this day; yet what gracious and full promises are made to this people, both to Israel and Judah, not only of gathering and raising them again, as under David and Solomon, and bringing them back to their own land; but spiritual promises of life and salvation, and such an incorruptible glory in the glorious state of Christ's kingdom at his return in his second appearance, as shall make that time exceed any time that the Gentile churches have yet known, as much as the light of the sun exceeds that of the moon.

Having glanced at this argument already, upon occasion given before by the argument drawn from the harmony that is in God's counsel and design, I shall be the briefer on it, and shall only glean a few reflections that remain on some passages in Rom. ix. where

the apostle spends the whole chapter on this argument, that God hath not finally cast off the Jews, but upon design for a *time* to receive them again with greater kindness than ever before.

I shall begin, ver. 11: "I say then," saith the apostle, "have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid, but rather through their fall, salvation is come to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy." O eagle-eyed apostle! how were thine eyes anointed with the divine eye-salve, to espy any good, to discern so great a counsel of good, in and through so dark a scene as this of the Jews rejecting of Christ, and their being for that rejected by God! it was as great a sin, as great a fall as ever men were guilty of. Indeed all were but peccadillos to this sin of their denying and crucifying of their own Messiah, yet this stumble the apostle will not have to be *that they might fall*. What a full, what a pregnant testimony is this to what we said before, that the design of wrath is *intermediate*, not *ultimate*; God hath a design of grace beyond his design of wrath, and that not to the Gentiles only, "to whom through their fall, salvation," he saith, "is come," but to the Jews themselves, after that, to provoke them to jealousy, to make them come in with a stomach to Christ. Yes, this is not the whole of the project neither, but there is a further part of it reacheth beyond this receiving in again, and there the Gentiles are to reap the advantage; for, "If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" So again, ver. 15, "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" O how full of light is this part of God's counsel! which otherwise, take it alone, is as dark as any text to the state of the damned in hell! How doth this cloud clear up! What an innocency, what a serenity appears in the original plot and conduct of all this darkness that is to end so blessedly, both to Jews and Gentiles!

The apostle hath not done with it yet, but is at it again, ver. 22, and I cannot blame him, it is so full, and such a pleasing wonder. Behold therefore, saith he, the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell severity; but towards thee goodness, &c. The apostle James saith, "out of the same fountain proceeds not sweet water and bitter," yet here is severity and goodness exercised by the same God. What must we conclude then? that his severity is not without goodness, nor contrary to it; not incompatible with it; his goodness can admit severity and yet remain goodness notwithstanding; how doth this still arride, and confirm that account before given, a *love design*, or project, a *mask of love*, a *love dance*? We have here, divine love takes out the Jews alone, and leads them about for the space of two thousand years from Abraham, then he looseth hands with them, and takes the Gentiles for near as long, and the Jews sit by. Here severity comes in and acts its part to make that scene full and glorious; severity waits upon goodness.

The Jews, the blessed seed of Abraham, his friend, are shut out, and their rejection must be a foil to set off the favour of these *new espousals to the Gentiles*: but the Gentiles also are corrupt and become an earthly Jerusalem, and they are turned off; and therefore there is another scene at last to be presented, and that is, the "fulness of the Gentiles," and "the fulness of the Jews," which are both to come in together, ver. 25. Here now both the beloveds are taken in and made one, never to be cast off more, "and so all Israel shall be saved," ver. 26. But this is not all neither; the apostle hath another essay at it in order to show the peculiar turn of art and skill of the great contriver, ver. 30, 31, and that is, to present the part that unbelief bears, in this scene, and how the unbelief of the Jews commends the mercy the Gentiles found, who obtained "mercy through their unbelief." That the unbelief of one people should be the believing of another, admits great alloy in the severity; but that the mercy of the latter people, the Gentiles, should at last issue in the mercy of the elder people, the Jews, "who through our mercy shall receive mercy;" this wholly excuses and absolves God's contrivance of all cruelty and injustice, and shows it to be only the ingenuity and wisdom of love. But there is one strain more, ver. 36, the last of this chapter, where the apostle having admired the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, the unsearchableness of his judgments, and the inscrutableness of his ways, concludes, "that of him, and through him, and unto him are all things," the rejoicing as well as embracing, the judgment as well as the mercy; the severity as well as the goodness; and therefore, saith he, "to him be glory for ever." This makes all good, all glory; all to be but a project of love and of glory. Evil proceeds from evil, as Abigail saith to David; but from God who is light, pure unmixed light, in whom is no darkness; from God who is love, love without alloy, nothing can proceed but what is like himself; all is here but the seat of the variegation, the pleasant disports and garnishing of a project and design of love; which in the close, and not till then, will present itself unspeakably beautiful and glorious, through all these interchangeable courses of lights and shades, so skilfully and advantageously displaying themselves into one entire light of glory, where the darkness itself shall in the design become a light, and every spot a beauty, to and in the whole piece.

*Obj.* But how doth such an account of things comport with the wrath of God, expressed all manner of ways, through all the Scriptures, through all times and ages against sin; forbidding of it, threatening of it, complaining of it, judging and punishing men for it, with such fierceness, with such seriousness! Doth not the apostle say, "we knowing the terrors of the Lord persuade men," and it is fearful to fall into the hands of the living God; yea, when he speaks to believers themselves, doth he not tell them, our God is a consuming fire? But by this account of yours, God shall seem *personam induere*, to

act the part, and not to be in earnest, to put on a disguise only for a time; doth not this invalidate all his threats and denunciations against sin?

*Answer.* I shall answer with a God forbid! How then shall God judge the world? what shall he ground his judgment upon in sending men to hell and holding them there, for so long continuance under such exquisite wrath and torment, if sin be not a real evil and demerit? And as for wrath, men under terror of conscience feel it real; and would God sport himself with the suffering and smart of his creatures, if he was not really concerned in his justice to deal so with them?

This course of things therefore hath its place in the first and natural relation, wherein God and the creature stand *apart singly* and at a distance, upon a distinct bottom and interest; but there is *another day*, another *light of things* brought forth in Christ, wherein God and the creature meet and are one, and wherein God immutably relieves and fixes the creature's mutability, and waveringness; his righteousness clothes, covers, smiles upon the creature's nakedness, unrighteousness and sin; here "mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other;" yea, mercy rejoices against judgment, and in this light of things it is, God speaks so lightly of sin, and lighter than we durst do, did not he go before us in it, Isa. i. 18: "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red as crimson they shall be as wool." The Septuagint is more emphatical, making it the *act* of God cleansing them; *λειτουργία*.

More is not said of the saints' robes, than is here said of their sins, "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. vii. 14. What is whiter than snow, what is softer than wool, yet what is blacker than sin, and what harder than iniquity? What a *power* therefore of love, of life, of righteousness, must that be, that can make such a change! This is that which in Psalm cxviii. 23, 24, is celebrated with such praise, "this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes; this is the day which the Lord hath made, we will be glad and rejoice therein."

For the further account hereof take these following particulars.

1. It must be true, God hath put on *another person* in Christ, and sits upon *another throne*; the *Judge* is changed, and his throne is changed from a tribunal of justice, to a throne of grace; but this change of his person and *aspect*, makes not his first appearance under the law, and in wrath feigned as passions in a play are. For sin and righteousness are as light and darkness: the holy nature of God, and the fallen nature of the creature, remaining so at an irreconcilable distance. And upon this account we hear of *eternal judgment*, everlasting and unquenchable fire; because this judgment, this fire never ceases burning upon sin, and upon the sinner, while he remains in *his own life*, which is enmity to God; in which *sense* the law is said to have dominion over a man so long as he



liveth, viz. until he be mystically slain, and then that dominion determines. And therefore,

2. In the second place, it is not without great and good cause, that the Lord puts on *another person*, that we find his person, his aspect, his appearance, so quite different from what it was, his frowns turned into smiles, his rebukes into embraces; that he changes his voice, and speaks so calmly, so undisturbed of the great provocations of his people. It is that *vast improvement* which God makes to the glory of all his attributes, and his grace eminently and ultimately by occasion of the fall, through the means of Christ, who is his arm in his design and counsel; it is the pleasure of this game, or divine project, that doth so please, and influence the Lord, as the prophet saith, "the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake;" for in this way of Christ he hath not only a full amends made for the breach of his law, and for all the sin and disobedience of men, (and that both by the fulfilling of it, and satisfying the penalty) but the old man is crucified, and the body of sin destroyed, and the state of all that believe fundamentally and substantially changed; and they made a clean new creation; they are not in the flesh, but in the spirit; they are taken up out of the first Adam, and planted in the second Adam, and are "as him, even in this world." So that now the wrath of God having discharged itself on Christ in his sufferings, way is made for that glory which is *dearest to God* of all his names, *his grace*, which all his other attributes do attend upon, and serve to the displaying itself in the freest and most unlimited, uncontrolled way that his heart can desire. Now in the *might of this salvation* he rejoices over his poor smitten creatures with joy; he rests in his love; yea he joys over them with singing, Zep. iii. 17, and calls them to rejoice with him. This project he had always in prospect, which made the Lord Jesus "his delight in eternity," Prov. viii. upon the account of his serviceableness to him in this design: but it was sparingly discovered unto men, until these last times; for though the promise was before the law, yet the law and wrath must enter to be a foil unto it; even as *first* is that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual, saith the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 46; and it is but darkly we yet see this, to what God sees, and to what we shall see when He, even the *Lord Jesus* shall appear, when we shall see God as he is, face to face.

So that it is in another, light than the light of man, that these things are seen and are true; whoever is not in some measure taken into this light "abideth in death and wrath abideth on him." This glorious scope and counsel of God, the apostle lays open at large, in Rom. v. in two instances, as two gradual steps of it. First, in the entrance of sin by Adam. Secondly, in the *reviving and abounding* of sin by the law. First, for Adam, he makes a *parallel* between the first and the second Adam, showing wherein they agree, and wherein they differ; they agree in this, that Adam was a head, and representa-

tive to all his seed, as Christ is; though Adam was but a subordinate head; yet he was the figure of him that was to come. Secondly, They agree in this, that the seed of both Adams were to be ruled by the fate of their several *heads and representatives*, and are so. For as, the first Adam falling, we were all reckoned to fall in him, which is the meaning of that ver. 12, "for as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men," viz. in Adam in whom all sinned, and accordingly death reigned, from Adam to Moses; he bounds it there; not that it reigned no more, or did not reign afterwards; but he distinguishes, as I said above, between the reign of sin before the law, which was but a diminutive reign, in comparison with the reign of sin by the law; when sin abounded and revived; for sin comparatively was not imputed, viz. charged upon the conscience before the law, as it was afterwards; the reddition of this parallel, is not in the text, but may be supplied out of the context, viz. "that even so righteousness entered by one, and life by righteousness."

But now the difference between these two he brings in with a *much more*, ver. 15, "but not as the offence, so also is the free gift, for if, through the offence of one, many be dead; *much more* the grace of God, and the gift by grace hath abounded unto many." I cannot conceive other meaning of it than this, "that there is much more in the heart of God to make men righteous by the second Adam without their own personal merit, than to make men sinners by the first Adam without their personal demerit. Where you see that grace hath the preference in the plot, God hath a design to show his wrath, and to make his *power* known but much more to glorify his grace."

2. The second difference, is in the comparison instituted between the *one sin of Adam* charged upon all his seed, and the *abundance* of Christ's *righteousness* imputed to his seed. It was but one slip, one transgression, and that was the eating of the forbidden fruit, that all mankind smarts for to this day; it is true their own sins inflame the reckoning, but they are dead and condemned men in Adam, by that *one sin*, had he or we never sinned more.

But now Christ performed many acts of obedience; yea, he was all righteous, and therefore our many offences are forgiven, and they "who receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one man Jesus Christ," ver. 16, 17, yea, ver. 18, the apostle extends the respect and relation of this to *all men*; "therefore," saith he, "as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;" which is to my general argument, though not to my particular scope. Here I grant the words in the Greek are defective, yet as to the parallel they are full enough. There is one offence upon all men to condemnation, and the righteousness of one upon all men to justification. Though it is true none but those that lay hold of it have the benefit of it, yet

it was a price paid for all; and that many other Scriptures do attest. And therefore the *many* in the next verse is not a bounding, a restraint, or limitation of the scope and intention of Christ's death; but if it respect that, it is equivalent to the *all* before; else it should be less than the severity, for all died in Adam, and therefore the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 22, saith, "In Christ shall all be made alive." For as the design for the manifesting of grace, is much more designed of God, and the grace and righteousness of the second Adam, is much more than the sin of the first, so the extent of it, with respect to the *subject* that reaps the benefit of it, it is not probable should be fewer or less. For though many are not always all, yet all are always many; but if it be to be understood only of some, not all, then it respects the present actual participation of the benefit of the sacrifice, by the many that do believe. This is the first instance.

2. The second, is of the reviving, of the abounding of sin by the law, for so the apostle, speaking of the times before the law in his own person, saith, "I was, alive once without the law," though, as a worthy author lately hath writ, it may be carried higher also, even to Adam in paradise, viz. men were comparatively alive; sin sat not so heavy on the conscience before the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; this is the abounding of sin by the law, whereof he speaks, ver. 20. Thus moreover, (that is as much as to say, I have done with Adam, and the derivation of sin and death from him to his posterity, before the law; but the tide is not at the full till the law entered, men knew not, felt not its utmost smart and misery till then) "the law entered that sin might abound." Is this a counsel for the good God to own, to exaggerate sin upon the consciences of poor sinners? Read on and you will see; "but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The law wrought to grace, and grace reaped the advantage of all the wrath that the law wrought; "that as sin hath reigned unto death," it hath reigned, viz. it hath had its reign; sin is served, it hath had its time; therefore now, it must give place to grace: "so might grace reign through righteousness to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Grace sweeps the stakes of all you see at last. Now if sin and wrath had not been *real*, then the glory of grace had been but a *pageant*; therefore let us take heed of that; it was as real as the nature of God, and the nature of the creature in his first make, could make it; but as real as it is, God hath a power to destroy, and null, and make it void, as if it had never been; and will do so, which makes the apostle sing, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord; who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," beginning first with the law, abolishing that after he had *fulfilled it*; and so destroying sin out of the conscience, both from reigning there by

guilt to condemnation, and destroying the power of lust and corruption out of the heart and members. Now as this is the counsel of God *in the law* to enhance and raise grace by the abounding of sin, so this is his counsel in all his *economy*, and the government of his great family in the whole world, in all his *providential dispensations*; and therefore we find how sweetly he closes after all his denunciations of severity and judgment to the people of the Jews by the prophets, he ends with promises of mercy and grace, and those *exceeding their punishment*, as it were easy to instance throughout the prophets; yea, many of the *nations* that God sent his prophets to threaten and to judge, he makes promises to visit them with mercy and deliverance afterwards; thus to Egypt, Jer. xlv. 28, to Moab, chap. xlviii. 47, to Ammon, chap. xlix. 6, to Elam, chap. xlix. last, so Isa. xix. 18, and ver. 25, to Sodom and Samaria, Ezek. xvi. 53, 57, and to Esau, Gen. xxvii. 40. Now is God thus gracious, and doth he deal thus *in the way*, while the nations are in the heat of their sins and provocations, while the seasons of wrath and judgment properly is, and while Christ hath not yet actually by his life, and by that power which he hath given him, reigned so powerfully, as to bring into effect all those glorious advantages of his death, as he will before the end; (for he must reign till all enemies be put under his feet); and will not that *end*, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even his Father, when he shall have destroyed all the works of the devil, be solemnized and celebrated with the acts of the greatest and most universal grace? Consider of it.

## CHAPTER IX.

A further Argument from the Universality of the Subject to whom the Gospel is sent forth to be preached.

THE texts that show this are Col. i. 23; Matt. xxviii. 19, and Mark last, and last ver.; Rev. xiv. 6; Eph. i. 10; chap. iii. 9; Col. i. 20; Tit. ii. 11. The first of these places Col. i. 23, speaking of that Gospel whereof Paul saith he "was made a minister," affirms it was preached to "every creature under heaven," a term large enough, yet no larger than the commission and charge was from our Saviour's own mouth in the two next places of Matthew and Mark; in the first of which he enjoins them "to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in this light of salvation," for so it is called *sprinkling*, Isa. lii. 15, which by the words following is interpreted of the *rain of knowledge*, as knowledge and doctrine is elsewhere resembled to rain and dew, Deut. xxxii. 2. With this light they were "to baptize all nations," not in their own name, or of their own good-will only, "but in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," a name and authority, sufficient to bear them out; and in the latter of these two evangelists it is more emphatically expressed: "Go ye into all the world, and



preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." I expect it will be here said, the Gospel carries forth *damnation* as well as salvation; which is most true, and more terrible damnation *than the law*: but this opposeth not what we say, nor do we deny this, but more of this in its place. These Scriptures show Christ's *commission*, and the apostle's execution.

The next Scripture shows it to be so *again* towards the fall of Babylon. The words are these: "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people;" with which agrees that in Rev. i. "Every eye shall see him, and all the tribes and kindreds of the earth, shall wail because of him;" which in Zachary is likened to the mourning for an only son, or for a first-born, which is a mourning of *compunction*, not of *desperation*, as if towards the end, the Gospel, which had been pinioned and straightened by the churlish dispensers or monopolizers rather of it, as Isaiah calls them, chap. xxxiii. 5-7, should recover its wings, and fly abroad, according to its *first frankness* and largeness.

Now to draw our argument from these Scriptures, before we come to the others, which are of another class, the Gospel is sent into all the world, and commanded to be *preached to all nations, to every creature under Heaven*, and this in the name of the whole Trinity. What is this Gospel? The apostle gives us the proper character of it, Acts xx. 24, calling it the "Gospel of the grace of God," and so in several other places, "the word of his grace," ver. 32, of this chapter, and chapter xiv. 3. But what is the word, what are the tidings, the good tidings of this grace? See Tim. i. 15, "that Christ came into the world to save sinners, yea the chief of sinners; this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." This is that that answers, that balances the ill tidings of Adam's fall, that lost us all; and nothing but such a thing as this can answer and balance it. This is to be preached to all the world, and every creature. "So God loved the world." "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." "The bread that I will give is my flesh, that I will give for the life of the world." He that believes not this shall be damned. This is the sanction of the holy Gospel, it is to be believed on the pain of damnation. Is it not then a truth that Christ died for all men, (not a truth by inference, but by the express assertion of Scripture, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15,) and gave himself a ransom for all men, paid the price of all men's redemption, not one excepted? Then it is not true that Christ died only for the elect; and that the Gospel is only sent to them, and only *propounded* indefinitely, but *intended* only to the *elect*, who are secretly guided to lay hold upon it, and to believe; for it is true of Judas, and of the veriest reprobate, that Christ died for him *intentionally*, as well as the choicest saint; and it is not for want of a part in Christ's blood allotted him of grace, but for not believing it, that he is damned.

It were no ways congruous or agreeable to the righteousness and justice of a holy God, the Judge of all the earth, to damn men for not believing that which doth not belong to them, or to which they have no right, no claim, no interest lawfully given and conferred upon them; for not believing the Gospel, which belongs to other men, and not to themselves. Therefore every man, as a man, as the son of Adam, *reprobate* as well as *elect*, hath a share and interest in the redeeming blood of the Son of God, and may assume and say truly, Christ died for him, and is the propitiation for his sin, and hath borne his iniquity, and the chastisement of his peace was upon Christ, else there is no Gospel preached to every creature. Now therefore here is the argument, if Christ died for all men, and this is the Gospel, then he is the Saviour of all men; and if he be the Saviour of all men, then there is no man but first or last must partake of the fruits and advantages of this death, otherwise Christ *died in vain*; as to the most of men Christ's travail miscarries. He died for all, but saves but few. Yet we say, and it is most true, that his blood is so precious, that *one drop of it* is of more value than the whole world, being the blood of God. Acts xx. 28. Therefore we conclude, that the damnation of men, for not believing, how long, how grievous soever (as it is both) and that which is unexpressible, weighs down all the pleasures of sin. Yea, the whole world is not worth, nor can compensate the loss of a soul; yet it must not, it cannot *finally* and *for ever* prevent them of partaking of the benefit. It is but a *sanction* of the Gospel. Now the sanction of a law, is a confirmation of it, not the frustration of it. And this is the utmost the apostle speaks of the worst and highest offenders against the Gospel, even of wilful sinners and apostates, Heb. x. 26, to 30. "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God," &c. So that when this punishment hath had its course, (as its course it must have, and it is bounded) grace shall return to its course, as the waters of Jordan did when Israel was passed over: else grace should be frustrated after great cost, such as the whole world cannot balance, and be defeated for ever: which is a consequence not once to be imagined, viz. that grace, which is the choice; the supreme glory of God, the word, that he hath magnified above all his names, should be thus muffled up and disappointed. Nay rather, this damnation of those that believe *not*, is for the *ratification*, the confirmation of this Gospel and grace of God, and the illustration of the glory of it; being the punishment of not believing it; it is the *vengeance of grace*; grace must not therefore destroy itself by its own vengeance: for why is the vengeance, but for the resisting and refusing of grace? therefore when grace hath taken vengeance, it must break forth again, and *cast up the cloud*. And thus the Lord gives us a little model of his plot in that particular dispensation of his

to Israel, Isaiah xxx. 15, to whom he said, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence; shall be your strength, but ye would not; yet ye said no, for we will flee upon horses. Will ye?" saith God, "and ye shall flee till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill;" desolate enough, and this for not believing. But shall this be *for ever*? Mark the next words, "And therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment, blessed are all they that wait for him." The Lord is a God of judgment, and therefore knows when to have done; he waits to be gracious, he longs to be at that work. Which seems to be the meaning of those words we meet with, Rom. ix. 22: "What, if God, willing to show his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, &c. As if the suspension of himself from the exercise of this grace, were great long-suffering. For this enduring the vessels of wrath with much long-suffering, must be understood either of God's enduring them *before he strikes them*, or his enduring of them, before his changing and returning them. Now if we take it in the former sense, how doth it agree with or answer these two ends: first, of showing his wrath, and making his power known: And secondly, making known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, for these ends are not answered thereby; his wrath is concealed whilst he spares them, and the riches of his glory to the vessels of *mercy*, are not made known: for while the wicked prosper *they* suffer; but in the latter sense both these ends are answered. God shows his wrath on those vessels of wrath, while he endures them as such, and thereby commends his love to the elect, the vessels of mercy, as we may see in Mal. i. 2, where God thus makes out his love to Israel: "I have loved you," saith the Lord, "yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Yet I loved Jacob and hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." O poor weak man, that needs such a light as this, to see the love of God! *contraria juxta se posita magis illucescunt*. Therefore the wrath on the vessels of wrath, seems to be ordained for this, as one main end to set off the riches of glory towards the vessels of mercy; and when that and other holy ends of it are attained, then will the Lord be at liberty to come forth in the manifestation of that grace, and those riches of glory which are most natural to him. Then his enduring, his suffering, his long-suffering of so dark a scene will have an end. Besides that this sense suits and agrees best with what is said of those vessels of wrath, that they are fitted to destruction; the Greek word signifies, made up, which relates to the action of the potter upon his lump, spoken of before, and therefore it is most agreeable to him to have such an end upon such vessels which himself hath made up in judgment, (this is wrath) that it

should end in the changing and restoring of them, which must be indeed by destroying and breaking them in their first form, wherein they are made up for wrath, as the apostle saith in the case of the incestuous Corinthian, "Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." And lastly, if we may be allowed so to understand it, that there is herein a close intimation of God's taking up at last, and changing and restoring these vessels of wrath in those terms of his enduring them with much long-suffering, as if burdened while they so remain. Then we have a fuller and more satisfactory answer to that objection, which the apostle raises, and undertakes to answer, ver. 14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God! (as Arminians say,) and thereby seek to overthrow Predestination; which is much allayed, if to the sovereignty of God, and his will, we add this, that it is not simply the exercise of his sovereignty, *but his glorious ends*, and those attained, this scene shall have an end, and while it lasts, *God himself suffers* and endures as well as they.

This I say brings him off fully in his act of predestination or *direction*; but as to the execution of this decree, it is not without the intervention of the creature's just demerit, viz. their unbelief; wherein is not a simple impotency, that they cannot believe, except it be given them to believe; for God tells them so, and deals most sincerely with them, and there is not a man at the last day, in the face of that great assembly, shall be able to say to God, "I came to thee in the sense of my want of faith, or the spirit, or any grace, and my inability to believe, or to give myself that grace, and thou denyedst me." But there is a malignity in the will against believing in this way of God to save men by grace, as well as against the changing of their hearts and natures by the spirit. "For men love darkness more than light," they love their lusts more than the image of God, and they love, and think highly of their own deeds, which Christ by his light shows to be evil; and that makes them to be ill affected to the Gospel, because it edifies them not in their over-weening opinion of their own righteousness, not knowing or believing those better works which God offers them in exchange: they are called the *works wrought in God*, which he that doth truly, and comes to the light, sees to be his works, and sees his work to be, viz. the work of God in Christ, made his by imputation: Christ's works, set to his account; which is his righteousness, and the spirit and life of Christ working all his works in him, and for him, in God, or in a divine principle; which is his holiness or sanctification. Both these are an abomination to a man in the flesh; and the higher parted and the more moralized he is (remaining a stranger to this light) the more fierce he is, and the bitterer enemy to it; as may be read in the Scribes and Pharisees, and the devout men and women of that day; and it is so still to this day, therefore now, there being a malignity in the will against believing, this



makes their suffering and damnation just, were there nothing else: but alas, at the back of this unbelief (as this that engages the soul therein) stand all those lusts, both the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life: Yet how long and grievous soever the punishment of this disobedience, it shall keep within the bounds of the *due proportion*, and not exceed the demerit beyond justice, for God will judge all men according to their works, and some shall find it easier than others; they that have sinned without law, they that have not had the means that others have, shall not have so hot a hell.

But to return to my argument, which to be sure will determine the sense of this, and all other like Scriptures, that they cannot conclude or shut up the Lord for ever from visiting those with forgiveness for whom Christ died. For if this be the Gospel, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, that he gave himself a ransom; and this Gospel is commanded to be carried out into the world, and preached to every creature, and they are required to believe it on pain of damnation; and if unbelief be the only sin, that makes all other sins damnable, as our Saviour himself implies, in John xvi. 9, where speaking of the Spirit convincing the world of sin, he hides all under unbelief "because they believe not on me;" then sure this is a most certain truth, that Christ is an object of confidence for every creature; and it is a most undoubted truth, that Christ died for every man, and if so, his death shall not be without effect, *first or last*. For we see there is a time for giving forth the joy and comfort of it to the elect themselves, who many of them are not called till late, and remain children of wrath in unbelief a long time; as also all the other fruits and advantages of Christ's death, and of his resurrection also, have their seasons differing, wherein they are given forth, to some sooner, to others later, as the resurrection of the body itself; which follows due by good right from Christ's resurrection, who arose again the third day. But though seventeen hundred years and more are elapsed from the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the dead are not raised. And when the resurrection shall come there will be an order in it; "they that are Christ's shall be raised at his coming," viz. they that came into Christ in this life-time, by believing, they are those the apostle speaks of, when he saith, "They that are Christ's at his coming;" but the rest lie in their graves till the end, as the apostle saith, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom," &c. And that is the time of raising of the rest of the dead, who are not to see nor to have their part in the blessedness of that time of Christ's kingdom upon the earth, yet I say raised must they be; and made alive they must be in Christ the second Adam, as they died in Adam; which by all fair construction must be taken of another life than merely the bodily life, because it answers to the life lost in the first Adam; but of that more in its proper place.

Wherefore, if men assign a less purchase to Christ's death, when he died for all, as the

Scripture expressly affirms, than the *justification of life*, as the apostle calls it, Rom. v. 18. they wrong and injure the blood of Christ, and set too low a value upon it. It is not the bringing men upon a new probation and trial, or making them simply saveable through the better use of their free will, than Adam made of it, and the purchasing of means, and space, and opportunity, as some would have it, that can be deemed in any righteous judgment a valuable consideration for Christ's blood; these might have been obtained at a cheaper rate; it is no less than the actual saving of those persons, every one of them, for whom Christ died, that can compensate so great a price as the blood of Christ.

Q. You will say, why then are men damned?

A. I answer, for not believing and obeying the Gospel: yet as their unbelief cannot, must not make the faith of God of no effect; so their punishment, be it how long soever, how grievous soever, cannot extinguish "the right and claim of Christ's blood for their deliverance," be it after ages and generations ever so many, Christ's blood loseth not its virtue, its value; nor can be satisfied, but cries till all for whom it was shed be delivered: and it was shed for the worst, the veriest backslider, one of the worst sort of sinners, else how can they be charged with counting the blood of the covenant, whereby they were sanctified, an unholy thing, as they are, Heb. x. 29.

## CHAPTER X.

### Of the Recapitulation, or Reunion of all Things under Christ their Head.

We come now to another class of Scriptures, the first whereof is, Eph. i. 10: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." This is the mystery of his will made known "to us by the Gospel, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." To this join Col. i. 20: "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, I say, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven;" what those things are, we may see more hereafter.

The words *αὐτὸν συναρτάμεν* rendered here to gather together in one, in the original signifies to rally or rehead routed or scattered forces or members, into their place, in the body, under their own head, into the place or rank where they were before: and the word *ἀποκαταλλάξαι* which is here rendered to reconcile, signifies to change a thing from enmity or antipathy to harmony, to make it *another thing* from what it was. It hath the same force with the other word, though from another metaphor; they both import, that all men, all things originally were made by Christ, stood in him, were headed under him, did bear a proportion to him, comforted dui-

fully with their relation to him, had no darkness or enmity, no antipathy; there was no war, no fighting, no disorder; all which came in by sin; therefore he saith, Christ *made peace* by the blood of the cross. By the fall all things are fallen asunder, and disjointed, and in a war, not knowing their place and subordination, they jumble one another, having *cast off their head* and dissolved the sacred bond that held them all together; they move in no order, no harmony, but confusedly like atoms in the sun: heaven and earth are mingled together as in the first *chaos*. This face of confusion dwells upon all things even the *elect* as well as the *reprobate*, the things in *heaven* as well as the things on *earth*, they are children of wrath by nature as well as others; they are without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; and thus they continue till Christ appears, whom God sends forth to recover this shattered and disjointed creation to himself, and to make it whole again, one new piece in him; for he is their *proper place* and habitation; which the angels that fell forsook first, and ravished man with them, and man carried all things else with him; and He addressing himself to this work like a wise workman falls upon the *root of the mischief* and disorder to remove that, which their was no other way to do, but by his own death; taking *all upon himself*. For they were all his, his body, his fulness, his members, the shadowy image of Him who is the substantial image of God; and they could not make satisfaction but it would ruin them for ever, and all the enmity was on their part; it was they were to be reconciled. We no where read of reconciling of God, but God reconciles the world to himself by Christ, and the love of God in Christ bearing their sins and frowardness, and disorders on himself in his own body on the tree, slaying this enmity and recovering them all to God in the person of Christ; makes them all return again to their places, and to stand first in a slain and crucified image in his death. Wherein the love of God beholding them descends upon them with the greatest ardour, and so quickens them and carries them up into one glorious image in the resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus. And this he doth for the *things in earth* as well as in *heaven*; for Christ contains both earth and heaven in him, and his kingdom consists of both a *new heaven* and a *new earth*.

Now the argument drawn from these Scriptures, lies in the generality and universality of the subject matter, upon which God thus designs, which is not only exprest generally *by all things*, but distributively, all things which are in earth, and which are in heaven. Now as the apostle argues in another case, without racking 1 Cor. xv. when he saith, "all things are put under him," he will not allow it to be a figurative speech, or a large speaking only, (but saith he) it is manifest that *nothing is excepted* that is not put under him. So if all things be reconciled, there is nothing but is reconciled, and if reconciled and that by his death, we know what follows,

Rom. v. 10: "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life: and sure there is power in his life and reign to do it;" and being brought back to him, as their head, and standing in him again as his members, sure none shall tear them from him. If they were but in his hands, as his sheep, he saith, none shall take them out of his hands, John x. 28, and if that be not enough, he adds, his Father is greater than all, and none shall pluck them out of his Father's hands. Will ye yield to this! Though as he immediately subjoins, He and his Father are one; his Father designed this recovery, and he the Son executed it.

This will be clearer, if we take in the other two Scriptures, Eph. iii. 9, "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ," and Tit. ii. 11: "The grace of God bringing salvation to all men hath appeared." Here in both places, the term is universal, *all men*; all men must see what is the fellowship of the mystery. What mystery? The mystery of the Gospel, which is the *saving mystery*, or the mystery of salvation, which hath been hid and cherished in the heart of God always from eternity, during this dark scene of things, from the beginning of the world, not only from the fall, but before. The first creation was but a shadowy image of it. In a shadow there is darkness as well as light; but since the *fall*, it was all dark. Not but that God did beam forth so much of this mystery, all along into the hearts of the elect, as sufficed to his end, and their salvation; yet in comparison, it was not revealed till Christ came, which is called the dispensation, Eph. i. 10: "The dispensation of the fulness of time," intimating to us, that there were several dispensations of this mystery of God's will, and several other times for those dispensations; but that this gathering up of all things into one in Christ, was reserved for the dispensation of the fulness of times, the times of Christ. All the times before, things lay disjointed as they were by the fall, things were sinking from Adam to Moses, and death reigned *openly*: life was conveyed but *secretly* in the promised seed, and then with Moses came the law, when sin and death grew to their height, as the apostle shows to the Romans; and so the times before Christ were the times of the fulness of sin, (at least) of sins under the first Testament. Now as sin and death grew and reigned by the law, till they came to their fulness, so now grace and righteousness must come to their fulness under Christ, which will not be till Christ's second coming. For so it is said, we shall be saved by his life; when Christ who is our life shall appear, then we read of the times of the Jews. If the diminishing of them be the riches of the world, and the casting off them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? And in the same chapter, we read of the fulness of the times, which is now come; that the seed of Abraham, the seed of Abraham, for his people, and if



any Gentiles, they were to be proselyted and ingrafted into that stock; and he took not all of them neither under the times of the Gospel. Hitherto he hath taken his Church indeed out of all nations, but a sprinkling only of the nations, and left out the body of the Jewish nation: but under the times of Christ's second appearance and reign, the fulness both of Jews and Gentiles are to be united, and in that all dispensations shall end, and with them all the times of this world, and time itself is said to go out, Rev. x. 6: "Time shall be no longer," which is another proof of this point; that all those gradual and contracted dispensations that shared the former times between sin and righteousness, life and death, are bounded by time, according to that Ec. iii. 1: "To every thing there is a season and a time, to every purpose under the heaven," as he there instances at large for eight verses together. But with time these vicissitudes and interchangeable courses of good and evil go out, and under the days of Christ's glorious and visible reign (or at least at or before the end thereof) enters the time of everlasting love, healing, and peace, which shall give place to the contrary no more; but as it was in the beginning so (with the addition of all spoils gained from the kingdom of darkness) shall it be for ever. Then shall this mystery of life and salvation, which was hid in God, be manifested *upon all men*, to make all men know the fellowship of it. For this was in the heart and counsel of God always from the beginning, though hid there, and not revealed till these last times; and there is a strong reason for it in the text, which extends it to every individual man, couched in these words, "Who created all things by Jesus Christ;" as who should say, Christ is the rock out of which all things, all men were hewed, and they were created of God by Jesus Christ, therefore shall be returned to him through the same Jesus Christ; they must all be reconciled and headed again under him. This is but just, that Christ should be reintegrated and made whole of all his members, if you can say any man was not created by Jesus Christ, him you may except; but the Scripture gives no allowance to such an exception, for it saith God created all things by Jesus Christ.

This gradual revelation of grace sparing at first, and more and more plentiful as the time grew on, is prefigured to us by the waters issuing from the sanctuary, Ezek. xlvii. which at first, for a thousand cubits are very shallow, but the increase for the next thousand is to the knees, the third thousand to the loins, the fourth thousand a river to swim in, and otherwise unpassable: which four thousand cubits, if they be understood of years, bring us to the times of Christ, when as sin had before abounded, so now was the time come for grace to superabound, and those waters go down into the desert, and into the sea, and being brought forth into the sea, it is said the waters shall be healed, ver. 8, and every thing wheresoever the river shall come, *shall live*, and Joel iii. 18, it is said of these waters, "a fountain

shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim, or the valley of Soddan, which is the valley of Sodom, near Jordan," as Mr. Ainsworth interprets it in his Annotations on Gen. xiv. 3, which agrees with the prophet Exekiel, chap. xvi. of giving Sodom and Samaria for daughters to Jerusalem, but not by *their* covenant. Now if Sodom shall be healed, you know that those are the cities set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

*Obj.* If you say, but we see not yet all men brought to the knowledge of the mystery.

*Ans.* I answer as our Saviour in another case, "the end is not yet." There were two thousand years before the law; there were two thousand years under the law. Christ's times are the fulness of times, but the fulness of these times of Christ are not "till the second appearance" in his glorious and visible kingdom, then he will take to himself his great power and reign. Christ hath not yet delivered up the kingdom to the Father. But,

2dly. I shall answer this exception in the words of the author to the Hebrews in a like case, chap. ii. 8, 9: "But now we see not yet all things put under him; but," saith the apostle, "we see Jesus who for a little time (for so the words should be read) was made lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." There are two things in this answer, and both of them of great satisfaction.

First. That though we see not the whole race of men thus magnified (as the Spirit by the mouth of David, Ps. viii., imports, there speaking of things future, as done) yet, saith the apostle) we see Jesus thus magnified and exalted after his humiliation and abasement; and if you say what is that to us? ver. 10, shows you he is the captain and representative of the whole, and what is done to him, is done to them, and shall be done to them; for "both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are both of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

2dly. The foundation of this exaltation of every man is laid in Christ's suffering death for every man; which by the grace and favour of God he did; he tasted death for every man, therefore if that can work out any glory for men, we are sure of that; every man hath a share and interest in his sufferings, in his death; and this is assured so perfectly, that the apostle doth not use a general word, that he tasted death for the world, nor the plural number, for all men, which might have been looked upon as intimating a universalness, but not so strict a universality; but *ὑπὲρ πάντων*, for every man; as if the apostle had studied to obviate and prevent any such subterfuge or evasion. And it is but according to the first design which objected itself upon man, as man, and therefore every one that hath the nature of man is under that gracious counsel and design; which sin breaking in to cross, Christ hath again taken out of the way by his death, he tasting death for every man, not a man, but

his death had an eye unto; and every man, as a man, hath a part in it by the designation even of the Father also, or the grace of God, and indeed the death of Christ being by God's ordination, the sole sufficient means of the reconciliation of men to God, if God bear a good will to all men (as if it be good-will to men, as men, it must be to all) then this means must be intended for all; and if intended for all, it must be some time or other applied to all. For the intention of God, as well as his work, must not be vain, nor return unto him empty, without effecting the thing intended. Therefore as it is the sole-sufficient, so it must be an all-sufficient means, and effectual to the bringing in of all men to God first or last; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of this saving mystery. And for this, among other reasons, might the resurrection of our Saviour, which was his rest and discharge from the painful work of our redemption, be cast, to be upon the first day of the week, as to take in all the works of God before him. How shall this make us admire the Lord! This is the use the apostle makes of it, Rom. xi. 33. After that discourse of the council of God in the rejection of the Jews, and after a prospect taken of the gracious and glorious issuing thereof, in having mercy upon all, he breaks out, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out:" and concludes, "that of him, and through him, and to him are all things." And mark what he instances, not in his mercies, they are plain, but in his judgments; "how unsearchable are his judgments," viz. who would look to find mercy in judgment? yet so it is, the richest mercy lies at the bottom of the severest judgments; this makes *mercy* such a mystery.

How should this bring us in love with God, who is love, who is such a good throughout! What a ground of confidence is this to the elect, to believers, if God loves all his creatures; all men; sure then those that he hath chosen to be the first fruits of his creatures, are upon a great and happy advantage and security. This seems to be in David, when he so often reflects upon the goodness of God to all, Ps. cxlv. 9: "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works;" and again, Ps. xxxvi. 5, 6: "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth to the clouds," viz. it fills the whole space between heaven and earth. "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, thy judgments are a great deep, thou preservest man and beast." And doth God take care of oxen! saith the apostle, ye are of much more value than many sparrows, saith our Lord. He that preserveth *beasts*, as who should say, will not lose *man*, will not lose so many souls; every one of which is more worth than the whole world of inferior creatures. What a strengthening might it be in the faith of Abraham. Is the covenant grounded on Christ, that righteous one, and his perfect obedience? When if there had been but *ten righteous persons in Sodom*, God would have spared Sodom. What a hope

may this yield us for all men; when God hath not the righteousness of ten righteous persons to sustain him in his showing mercy to them, but hath the perfect obedience and great sacrifice of his own Son. That spotless Lamb, his own righteousness, which is more than ten thousand of us offered up for them; which may bring him off with indemnity to his justice as engaged by the law, though otherwise man is the subject alone that needs to be reconciled.

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Objection grounded on Election and Reprobation Considered.

THIS doctrine may be judged to destroy election and reprobation, but unjustly. If it jumble with any clear truth of the Gospel, the controversy is decided, this doctrine cannot be truth. Election and reprobation is as clear a truth of the Gospel, as redemption by Christ is; not an election of *qualities* and *principles* (as some) but of *persons*; not *conditional* but *absolute* and *free*; not *subsequent*, of works or inclinations, but *antecedent* and *eternal* before any good or evil done by them; this is my faith wherein I stand, and this decree of election is *definite, certain, and irrevocable*; so that they are known by name and have great and certain *privileges* and *immunities*; as not only certain and everlasting *salvation*, presently *begun* at their calling and *perfected at death*, and at the resurrection of the dead; but also certain preservation from all damnable *errors* of seducing spirits, and the contagious or deadly *touch*, or contagion of the *evil one*, and the *sin unto death*.

Yet all this doth no more deny the salvation of the rest of men, in their order or due times, than the resurrection of Christ, the first-fruits, doth hinder the resurrection of all that sleep in him; whereof it is indeed the *earnest* and pledge. For as Christ is in his resurrection become the first-fruits of them that sleep, and assurance that they shall rise also: so are the elect in their sanctification and salvation, the *first-fruits of his creatures*, and the pledge and assurance of their sanctification and salvation; and that as the first-fruits of the Jewish Church, the seed of Abraham doth not deny the *lump* also of that nation to be visited with saving and effectual grace in due time, but as a pledge and assurance of it; as the apostle argueth, Rom. xi. 16, "for if the first-fruits be holy the lump also is holy," and if the root be holy so are the branches. Now as Christ is called the first-fruits of the elect, and the primitive church of the Jews were the first-fruits of that nation: so the *election* among Jews and Gentiles are called "a kind of first-fruits of his creatures," James i. 18; so also Jer. ii. 3; Rev. xiv. 4.

Now the ordinance of the first-fruits as you may see in the law, was this: they were to bring of the seven fruits of Canaan, mentioned Deut. viii. 8, (in which number is a mystery also;) and the design of it was to acknowledge the Lord's right to the whole



land and all the fruits thereof, as by the form they used at the solemnity may be seen, Deut. xvi. 16, 17, which is the meaning of what the apostle saith, if the first-fruits be holy, viz. if it be the Lord's, and given to the Lord, the lump is also holy: the lump is the Lord's, and shall be given to him, or taken by him in due time, when he takes to himself his great power and reigns.

Now apply this first-fruits to men; for what are the fruits of the earth to God? "will he eat the flesh of bulls, and drink the blood of goats?" doth he feed on wheat, or barley, or pomegranates, figs, or dates, which were the first-fruits under the law? "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Israel was the first-fruits of the nation till Christ came. The election is now the first-fruits of his creatures; who are all to be gathered in at Christ's second appearance, before he delivers up the kingdom to the Father.

What is there in election against this? but rather an argument for it, and a confirmation of it; especially if we consider the form used at the first-fruits, where the Israelites confessed themselves to be as abject an interest as any of the nations, till God looked upon them. "An Assyrian ready to perish was my father," referring to Jacob, serving Laban, and keeping his sheep for twenty years; and then oppressed and made bondsmen in Egypt; of the same lump with the meanest of the nations, till God exalted them to that privilege by grace, even as the elect are by nature children of wrath, even as others; therefore by grace may others be raised as well as they. For as all the fruits of Canaan were the Lord's, as well as the first-fruits: so doth he not say, "all souls are mine," the soul of the son, as well as the father; the souls that sin and die, as well as the souls that are righteous and live?

But let us consider these decrees under those other notions we meet with in Scripture of *vessels*, vessels of honour and dishonour, vessels of wrath, and vessels of mercy. The apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 20, speaking of some opinions and doctrines which he calls profane and vain babblings, that were very dangerous and contagious, eating as doth a canker, and overthrowing the faith of some, making the state of them that held and broached them dangerous enough; having shewed us the dark side of this cloud, yet to quiet us in the work of God in it gives us this placid account of it, which we may call the light side of the cloud, (for so is every dispensation of God, a dark and a light and hopeful side, that the saint may in nothing sorrow as those without hope) the account he delivers thus: "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour and some to dishonour." Mark you how the vessels to dishonour are *vessels*, as well as the vessels to honour. For all vessels are *useful*, and for use; no man makes a vessel merely for destruction, but *for use*: though a dishonourable use, yet it is a necessary use; and there is some honour in that, with the dishonour: yea, it is of use to the house, it is a

vessel of the house, the great house. This great house is the great world, which is the house of God, as even the bodies as well as souls of men are said to be the Lord's, and to be made by him, and their members to be his; members of Christ, though they make them members of an harlot, both mystically and literally; and they are said to have their bodies of him, and to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, and not to be their own. And the reason following carries it for the bodies of all men, "for ye are bought with a price;" all these are to be found in 1 Cor. vi. from ver. 16, to the end.

But this will appear more fully, if we consider what is the use of those vessels to dishonour. We have it in part before, the vessels of wrath *are to commend the grace of God* to the vessels of mercy: as misery sets off mercy, so wrath commends grace; grace would have been grace if wrath had never been, but grace would not have so appeared grace; as the apostle saith, sin would not have been so exceeding sinful, if it had not been for the law. Light would have been light had there been no night, no darkness; but light would not have so appeared light, nor have been so commended to us, who need the help of one contrary to illustrate another; and so I may say is sin and righteousness, Christ and Belial. Therefore God that made the day to consist of *evening and morning*, a light part and a dark; he also ordained the law as a foil to grace, wrath as a set-off to love.

Now then, if this be the end of wrath, when this end is attained and perfected, (as God's end must be sooner or later) else he should never rest, which is not to be imagined of omnipotency, then must wrath end, in its end thus obtained.

But the further use of these vessels to dishonour, 1 Cor. xi. 19, "For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you." The light manifests errors, and heresies manifest the truth, as contraries illustrate one another. God hath built this world for these contraries to display themselves: "For this cause," saith God to Pharaoh, "have I raised thee up, (to this eminency of subtlety and power) that I might show my power." Thus the Lord hath appointed all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. "The wicked and his day too are both for the Lord himself." The wicked for the day, and the day for the Lord; and when the wicked and his day have both served their end, then there is another day wherein God will appear as he is; and he is *love*. This is the message that we have heard of him, that *God is light, and in him is no darkness at all*. Then,

3. Consider whose work it is, this difference of vessels and work; it is the Lord's; he owns it; "he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." The hardening proceedeth from the same will as the mercy. Now the will or pleasure of God is the source or fountain of the highest pleasure. Man's will is called his pleasure, but man may have pleasure in unrighteousness, and in the misery and slave-

ry of others, as tyrants have; but God, who is not divided from his creatures and works, though he have the liberty to design and practice upon them for the illustration of his glory; yet he seeks not, serves not himself *ultimately*, but in and by the profit, the advantage of the creature. It is said in Jude iv, "There are certain men crept in unawares," that is, unawares to the Church, but not to God; for they were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord is *προγεγραμμένοι*, and it signifies *conscripti*, fore-written, or listed, as soldiers in a company. Answerable hereto we meet with a word before, *κατατεταμένοι εἰς ἀπωμίαν*, made up, or fitted to destruction. It is a dreadful destiny, but let us consider whose will and ordination this is, who it is that pricks down every name in this *black roll*. It is infinite goodness, infinite sweetness doth it, and this brings in some light into this dark shade. If you look on the ways of God towards his dearest children, and wait not for the end, you may see such dark shades, as in the case of Job; which therefore the apostle holds forth to us in the light of the end. You have heard of the patience of Job, and the end of the Lord. *Finis coronat opus*. If you say God doth not declare or reveal this end, I grant it is but sparingly hinted, because this scene of wrath, and of the conflict of contraries is not yet over, and we are blinded with the dust of it; but we see this end, though darkly in the nature of God, who is love; we see it in the mediation of Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all, who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world; yea, for these very men ordained to this condemnation, and that do certainly bring upon themselves swift destruction, 2 Pet. ii. 1, he bought even them that deny him, and bring in those damnable heresies.

*Obj.* But you will say, doth not this make God the author of sin, that he ordains men to condemnation and punishment?

*Answer.* God is not tempted of evil, neither doth he tempt any man; he puts no evil into man, doth not positively influence him to evil; he needs not do that, design he never so much on the evil of the creature to draw forth good out of it; for the creature is a creature, is mutable, corruptible, hath a defectibility without confirming grace; but God *withholds*, according to the counsel of his will, that grace from the reprobate; and this is that which he may lawfully do for the illustration of his own holiness, purity, immutability; that the creature showing himself to be a creature, a mere dependency, God may appear to be God. "Thus he made all things for himself," saith Solomon; but where doth he find himself in the winding up, but in casting out this enemy that is gotten into man, and in restoring him to his own image, and embrace as at first. But to clear up this, I will show in two instances, the prerogative that God exerciseth justly and righteously in withholding grace from men.

1. In withholding the means.

2. In withholding the blessing upon the means.

1. The means: not that God hath left any of his creatures wholly without means, for whosoever he brings forth into the light of this world, he furnishes them with the means of knowing him, as the apostle said, Rom. ii. 20, &c. and in Acts xiv. 17. Such and so sufficient means as shall leave them *ineffectual*, and stop their mouths at that great tribunal. But *comparatively* with the means he affords to others, he denies the means to the greatest part of the world. He hath not dealt so with every nation, saith the Psalmist, when he contemplates and surveys the goodness of the Lord to Israel, to whom he gave his statutes and his judgments. So saith our Saviour to the Jews of Corazin and Bethsaida, "If the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Math. xi. 21. And so he saith to Capernaum, "If the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sidon, it would have remained to this day."

2. But now the Jews had all these means and mighty works, yet repented not: here therefore the Lord denies not the means, but Dent. xxix. 4, *withholds of blessing*, yea more than this, he owns to blind their eyes and harden their hearts, and gives the means a commission to a quite contrary effect than their conversion, even to make their hearts fat, and their ears heavy, lest they should see and be converted, and he should heal them. John xii. 40; Rom. xi. 8. God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, to this day; mark that, (unto this day) that qualifies it: that day lasts still on the generality of the people; but it is not said it shall last for ever, and that they shall never see nor hear; nay, there are plentiful promises to the contrary, and in ver. 11, the apostle takes them up again, and shows the candid design God hath in this; "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid! but rather, through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles." This is the light side of the design, which makes amends for the other at present; but the other and further purposes he breaks open afterwards, from ver. 52, to the end of the chapter which I have pointed at before.

*Obj.* But you may say, if God hath such a counsel, and it is his pleasure thus to illustrate his glory; the glory of all his attributes in such a way, to withhold his grace from the greatest part of his creatures: yet how can we reconcile such severe punishing of them, (not only with temporal, but especially with eternal damnation) I say, how can this be reconciled to such an universal sweetness and goodness as you hold forth in God!

*Answer.* One would think this was the objection that crost the way to this apostle in his discourse of this very point, Rom. ix. 19, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" and then I pray take his answer. "Nay, but



O man! who art thou that repliest against God: shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay," &c. But my answer is, that in some respect this is that objection, but in another respect it is not; for the objection as it is here urged, lies against the goodness of God, but as it is taken up by the apostle, it lies only *against his justice*; and so in Rom. iii. 5. Is God unrighteous that taketh vengeance? Where the apostle makes his apology for naming it. "I speak as a man," saith he, as who would say, I have learned otherwise as a Christian, than to mention such a thing in a way of questioning, as whether God be righteous or no: nay, it puts him into an ecstasy, as the next words shew; "God forbid, for how then shall God judge the world?" And this may be the reason why he is so short in the answer of it, in both places, because it was a question not fit to be made, or an objection not fit to be brought in a captious way by men; and therefore he minds them of themselves and their mean extraction, they are but as clay before the potter; as things formed: for whom to arraign the *Former*, the Former of all things, is not only very uncomely, but most absurd. Thus it is not the same objection, yet as the righteousness of God is concerned to make all his ways agree and comport with his *goodness*, so it is in that respect also an objection that touches the righteousness of God: for he must be just to himself as well as to his creatures; he must not eternally, no not for a moment, appear in any act or dispensation that consists not, yea, that is not in most full and perfect harmony with his infinite and eternal sweetness, love, grace, and goodness in a right and true discerning of it in a true light.

And therefore though the apostle be so short and round with these objections in both these places; it is not, I conceive, that he had not more to say upon them, but to that proud and petulant spirit, that would arraign the justice and righteousness of God, he thinks them worthy of no further answers; but to shake them off as he did the viper into the fire.

But as the day comes on for the manifestation of things, the divine light may enable to give further answer, as the season and occasion may require. It is said, "know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" And if God will judge the secrets of all hearts, according to the gospel, if we see it, whereby every mouth may be stopped; and we have the hopes left upon record by the same apostle, that howsoever we now see through a glass darkly; *yet we shall see face to face* and know as we are known; and since the time is very near this of judgment, and therefore we may expect that this light of things promised, should be opened upon us; as indeed this light doth open upon us, which turns to us for a testimony that the day draws near; then we may proceed to a more full solution.

1. Therefore, to those that acknowledge the righteousness of God, that he cannot be unrighteous, for he is the former of all things; he may do with his own what he pleases; whatsoever he doth, is and must needs be

righteous, because he doth it; for who should give law to him? to those that can say thus, yet are not furnished with an answer to check every rising in their own heart, or the objections they hear from perverse men; nor to stop their mouths, though they allow them not at all, we shall offer a supply of argument, and proceed to examine this plea against the *Judge of all the earth*. He hath justified us; let us see if in his light we are able to do any service for him. I have said before, that God is not the author of any man's sin, by *positive* influence, or instilling evil into him. Nor is he the inflicter of the least punishment, much less of their damnation in hell, *without just cause of their sin*: So that every man's destruction is of himself, and his own concupiscence. God withholds grace, that must be granted, that is, such grace as he grants to some; though he affords means to all, and that sufficient to render them inexcusable, though not effectual to save them presently, or in the present time. For he hath not only given them the book of the creatures, wherein to read his goodness and their own beings, with all the mercies and comforts of them, as the apostle saith, Acts xvii. 28; Rom. i. 20; Acts xiv. 17; Rom. x. 18, 19, taken out of Psalm xix, which gathers and binds up the books of God, both the book of the world, and the book of the word, or the scriptures, into one volume; but which is more, God hath done more for the world, than the greatest part of them know or will know; *He hath given his Son for them, to die for them*, and reconcile them, by bearing their iniquities; and though they have lost or forgotten their benefit, or thrust it away from them, the Lord took care that this gospel should be carried into all the world, and *preached to every creature under heaven*; and the apostle Paul saith it was so, as we have noted before, and therefore God may justly require an account of it, as he will do: this is the first thing to clear the righteousness of God. But,

2. Though God doth withhold that grace from men, whereby they might have been kept from sinning, and from their contempt of his goodness, and thrusting it away from them; yet therein his throne is guiltless, as may convincingly appear if we consider,

1st. That God hath dealt as candidly with men as possibly can be desired, and hath told them over and over in his word, that they are dead in trespasses and sins, and that without him they can do nothing truly or spiritually good; that he loves first, and that from him is all their fruit found; and this is the language, not of scripture only, but of nature; for every man feels himself to be a mere dependency, and to have his being of grace from God, not of himself; and the light of reason, which men can improve in other things, tells them that *unde esse inde operari*; whence men's beings are, thence must their working be; if we live, move, and have our being in God (not only from him, but in him) as to this life of nature; then sure we cannot live nor move in any spiritual life or action, without his immediate quickening presence and influence.

2ndly. The Lord hath left a promise large

enough, to give the Spirit to, every one that asks it, Mat. vii. 7; Luke xi. 9. Where the Spirit, and all the good things of the Spirit are promised to every one that asketh in faith, and with the same good earnest as a child asks bread when he is hungry, or as men seek for treasure, as Solomon speaks, Prov. ii. 4. Upon which account I shall be bold to say, there is not a man at the last day shall be able to say to God, "I sought of thee the Spirit in the sense of my indispensable need of it, as being undone without it. I sought it as a hungry man seeks bread, or with the same seriousness, sincerity, or earnestness, as men seek treasure, or the things of this life, and thou deniedst me." For to such a seeking is the promise made, and to such a seeking are men instituted, if they take heed thereto. What man regards an indifferent, cold, careless suitor, that seeks without concern, not mattering what becomes of his suit?

3rdly. Now so far are men from this (all men that are not bowed, persuaded, drawn of God, of his special grace and favour) that they have an enmity, antipathy, contrariety to the gospel, and this way of salvation by grace; yea, it is *foolishness*, it is an *abomination* to them. So is man's nature corrupted and fly-blown with pride and conceit, by Satan, that grand enemy of the grace of God; for what man ever yet hated his own flesh, as the apostle saith in another case, but nourishes and cherishes it (as here in corrupt nature) against the Lord? And if a man close with Christ, he must hate his own life comparatively, that is, he must bring under his body, even the body of all natural and legal righteousness and perfection, counting all things dung in comparison of Christ, and the righteousness of God. I might be copious upon this, but I do but touch it, which is sufficient in the pursuit of my argument.

4thly. These uses of dishonour that the vessels of dishonour are employed in, are of *their own choosing*, so that they have no wrong therein, or if they have, they do themselves the wrong. I speak not here of sin in *general*, which is men's own choice, and all their sensual lusts and appetites, but of those works wherein God employs both the evil spirits and wicked men. In doing of which they sin, as not doing God's will, nor having any regard to his *commission*, and the bounds thereof, but executing their own lust and malice, as may be instanced, first in the devil and his angels. You read of a seducing spirit commissioned against Ahab, to draw him to his own destruction at Ramoth Gilead; the spirit that did it, *offered himself*; and so in the case of Job, the devil *desired the work* to afflict and prove Job. These were both righteous works in God. Ahab had forfeited his life by his wickedness before, and it was an act of justice in God to bring him to punishment; and the making the patience of Job conspicuous, and setting him up as an example, was likewise an honourable counsel and work, as it was the counsel and work of God; but Satan in both these was a *vessel to dishonour*, and it was dirty work, as performed by him in his own spirit, and yet it was the work of *his own*

*seeking*, not of God's *imposing*; and so for men that are the instruments of God's vengeance on one another, or of his punishments on his own people, Pharaoh, Senacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar; they were all raised and employed by God to humble Israel, yet they all did *their own work*, and satisfied their own will and lusts therein, and therefore the Lord brings in their charge against them. "I was a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction." Zech. i. 15. And it is a work they needed not to be set upon; they have a propensity to it of their own accord, and cannot be kept back from it without force, as a grey-hound, if a hare be started before him, and the grey-hound be at liberty, he makes at her without setting on. So we might observe of Judas; he was ordained of God to that work, as the work itself was predetermined and foretold, that Christ should be sold, and that by a familiar. Yet Judas did it out of his own wicked and covetous heart, for so saith the scripture, Satan having put into Judas's heart to betray his Master, he went and drove the bargain; and so Gog and Magog, Ezek. xxxviii. 10, "Things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought," &c. Yet the work is God's work, to bring the last trial upon the church, after which shall be no more, yet the instruments are evil in it, and set themselves on work, and shall be rewarded accordingly; fire from God, from out of heaven shall feed upon them; and is it not just that it should be so?

5thly. Especially if we consider, that the reward of every man shall be *according to his works*. God will observe a most righteous proportion therein; therefore our Saviour saith it shall be easier in the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon, than for Corazin and Bethsaida, easier for Sodom than for Capernaum, because they had not the means that others had. Upon which account, if a man was sure he was a reprobate and *must* go to hell, it were his concern to keep off from as much sin as he could, for by that means his punishment would be the less. He that knew not his Master's will shall be beaten, but with *few stripes*, in comparison of him that knew and did it not. Thy careless and wretched neglect of means of knowledge tendered, will not excuse (as ignorance) but such shall be reckoned, as knowing what they *might have known*, had it not been for their own neglect.

This is but a little of what God hath to bring of his own justice and righteousness at that great day; yet this is more than I can see how any man can answer. But if I am short in what might be pleaded under this head of the justice and righteousness of God, properly so called, as it relates to sin and sinners, you may perhaps find it made up in this other head of goodness; for he hath a justice to *that*, he must not, he cannot deny himself; he that is true to every thing, must not be unjust to himself, and to his *highest and dearest glory*, which is his *grace*, that word which he hath magnified above all his names; for God is love. Love is himself most adequately and properly, and all his other glories and attributes serve and minister to this; as the gospel abundantly testifies.



Therefore, now, as I said before, he must not, he cannot by any one act of administration, much less by a course, an *endless course of wrath* and judgment, for ever cover this face of his love, so bright and amiable. Therefore having premised this, I come to answer that objection :

*Obj.* How this way of withdrawing and shutting up himself from his creature man (the greatest part of men) whereby they miscarry (notwithstanding all he hath done for them by Christ, whom he gave to bear their sins, and die for them) and do both sin and fail of this grace of God, and perish and fall into hell, can stand with his being *one eternal act of sweetness and goodness in himself, and unto all.*

*Answer.* To which I answer, that in seeking this sweetness of God, we must not look for a single sweetness standing alone from all his other glories and attributes, but for a sweetness arising from them all in their *harmonious temperature* and composure ; a sweetness that gives free scope and liberty to them all ; wherein their distinct sounds are given and heard, as in music ; yet all so excellent and skilfully subdued to harmony, that the greatest and most ravishing sweetness, is the result and effect of all those notes both open and stopt, both sharps and flats, both concords and discords, both trebles, bases, and means, or whatever else varieties or contrarieties might be instanced. And without this, and in comparison with this, the sweetest chords or notes *single*, though very sweet in themselves, (as there is a great difference in strings, notes, and stops) yet alone they are dull and flat, and barren of the delight and satisfaction to the hearers.

Now in making out this sweetness, this harmony, we must know that God is the supreme, the greatest, the most absolute, the most perfect unity, comprehending in himself all variety, not only the variety of *diversity*, but of *contrariety*, for so it is said, he calleth things that are *not* (such are sin and unrighteousness, which are *privations*, and have no *positive* being ; yet in his counsel about them, and design upon them, he gives them *being*, and calls them) as though they were, and makes them an illustration of *being*, an illustration of things that are, of his own wisdom and righteousness.

2. The sweetness and harmony in this variety of diversity and contrariety, is the descending of this unity and sweetness to the *utmost point*, and diffusing itself through all this variety, this contrariety, imparting to it, in all its passing through it, the sweetness of his own glorious counsel and design ; and in the close resting upon it, in a most magnificent, open, and full revelation of itself in the whole, and in every part as it is in the whole. This is the sweetness of the face and heart of God, in all the dark tempestuous scenes of sin and wrath, during the times of this world.

This might be demonstrated both in the *parts* and in the *whole*, there being a particular beauty in every particular act of this tragicomic scene, as Solomon saith, everything being beautiful in its season ; there being nothing *single* or *alone* in the work of God, but bearing

an harmonious relation to other parts and to the whole ; whence result the beauty of the whole. Sharp trials, and the reward of sweetest joys being in conjunction, and by a mutual, reciprocal projection of their ray, towards and upon each other, setting off and illustrating one another : and so, sweet sin, and bitter punishment : Dives in his life-time receiving his good things, while Lazarus receives evil : and so in the other life Lazarus is comforted, while Dives is tormented. The vessels to dishonour have most generally the praise, honour, and advantage of this world, while the poor in this world are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.

*Obj.* All this will pass well enough, but still you will say the contrariety remains, and there are happy ones and miserable ones, some seemingly happy and really miserable, others really happy and seemingly miserable ; some only happy in this world, but miserable in the next, others miserable in this world, and happy in the next ?

*Answer.* The grace, the sweetness, that rests upon every part in this catholic and universal scene, is that which ariseth from the light of the whole, which to the eye of eternity appears in every step of his way ; yea, to him appeared from eternity, before the actual production of any creature, but to us who are creatures, will not visibly appear but in the end, or consummation, when the mystery of God shall be finished, when the body of sin and righteousness shall both have received their complete form and actuation, the fulness of all *their integral parts and members*. Thus shall they rest, as it were, and lie down together in the harmonious bosom of that glorious and matchless counsel and design, that calls up both the things that are not, and the things that are upon the stage of this world, of heaven and earth, to display themselves in their several shapes and colours, for the glory of that great architectonic wisdom and love that designed them all ; and designed upon them all the illustrations of that last and sweetest close, that overcoming, that ravishing love and goodness, which is the end of them all.

Now for the further clearing of this, we are presented with three scenes in this great design, which have their distinct and particular seasons allotted them.

The first is the scene of this world, wherein light and darkness, life and death, are brought upon the stage, with these limited and bounded missions, to display themselves in their contraries and antipathies, and this scene takes up all the times of this world.

The second scene is the reconciliation of all these antipathies and contraries, a subduing them to the harmony of the design and council of God, which is the work of Christ and his cross to begin, and his life and kingly power to perfect. And this is begun in the elect in this world ; perfected at death, and in the resurrection of the dead ; they being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb of the rest of the creation, in whom this work is not begun till the world to come, or Christ's kingdom is gloriously revealed on earth : and then shall it (before Christ hath done, and be-

fore, or at his resignation of the kingdom to the Father) be finished upon the whole nature of mankind, and every individual person.

The third scene is, The glorious fruit and triumph of the whole, thus finished and perfected in the kingdom of the Father; whence both these other scenes shall be swallowed up, and yet shall remain as a landscape of glory to all eternity: where both the elect and reprobate having acted their parts in this design, shall eternally with highest joy and thankfulness, contemplate and review the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, that governed and managed such contrarieties, reconciled such antipathies, and brought forth at last so glorious an issue out of them all, where sinners of all sorts and sizes shall see all their sufferings, temptations, desertions; but shall be afflicted with them no more. They shall look on all indeed as dangers they have passed, as deaths they are delivered out of; yea, so shall the damned rejoice over that hell they have been in. They shall reflect on that fire out of which they are delivered; and it shall be the food of their joy. So that the design of God being now accomplished, and opening itself, shall swallow up all the passions of grief and sorrow that accompanied these scenes of troubles, while they were in acting; and his righteousness, which is this glorious end, shall swallow up the creature's unrighteousness whereby he has served and wrought unto this end, as he was ordained, but knew it not, which was both his sin and pain; and the creature will see that this glorious Jesus was no thanks to him, but to that glorious counsel and wisdom, that brought good out of evil in this new creation, as he commanded light to shine out of darkness in the first creation. For *ye did it to evil*, saith Joseph to his brethren, *but God turned it to good*.

These are the three scenes: and if we allow the first and not the second, we must keep God and his word at a distance for ever, we must deny Christ to have fulfilled the end he was sent and ordained for, or to do it but in part; yea, we must make God or his work, which is all one, (for God's will and counsel is himself, and his work is the will and counsel executed and brought forth, and all things are this will and counsel) but a part and not the whole, and to whom, or to what shall we cast the other part, unless with the *Manichees*, we make two eternal principles, one of good, the other of evil, which is all one as to make two Gods.

And if we allow this second scene, as if we deny not the scripture we must, for he must reign, and by the power of his life and kingdom finish the work he laid the foundation of in his death and reign, until all his enemies are put under his feet, until death be destroyed, called the last enemy. And is it only temporal death, think you? What glory would be in that, to destroy temporal death, and to leave eternal death rampant over the greatest part of mankind? Therefore death, however, in that place, 1 Cor. xv., relating to bodily death in that argument, yet it implies the other with a *multo magis*, much more: then I say, this being allowed, the third scene

will necessarily follow. For when the law hath lost its strength, and death its sting, and sin its force, what should hinder, that the whole choir of every creature, which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them should join hallelujahs, and celebrate that grace, that wisdom, that delivered and rescued them out of the jaws of death, the second death. Then every sin that sinners have committed, and every aggravation of their sins, the root of sin being now slain by this gracious, this glorious counsel of God, (in the winding up of all, shining forth upon them) shall be the oil and fuel of their joy and triumph, making the flame thereof ascend the higher and stronger: yea the remembrance of the bitter twinges, and pangs, and torments they have suffered for them, shall increase their pleasure, and give them the fuller, the sweeter relishes of their present endless ease and deliverance.

Thus we see how all these conflicting scenes of light and darkness, good and evil, are bounded *within the times of this world*; and that the reconciliation of them, the subduing the enmity, and vanquishing the darkness totally is the work of the *next world*, and must receive its accomplishment then; before that world ends, before that kingdom be delivered up to the Father. And we see also that the world to come hath an end, and what that end is, even the glorious kingdom of the Father, the kingdom of eternity, and that nothing must last or endure beyond the times of these two worlds, (which are bounded with time) but that which was before them, in which sin nor hell neither of them were: but together with which these worlds, which are but as a double *parenthesis* in eternity, or between both, (that a *parte ante* and that a *parte post*) must receive their determination at last; and so *spotless* eternity, that light in which is no darkness at all, must recover its lost beauty and glory, and shine forth again universally with open face, with the spoils and trophies of *conquered time*, and all its births for ever.

Let no man say, how can these things be? For all things have an end, and pass away, and fail but *love*; even the fainter and weaker diversities of *light and grace*; as we may see in Paradise, and the old world, and the law, and the temple, and that first covenant, yea, the day of Christ's first appearance, the seven Churches of Asia, with the glory of the primitive times. Much more hath the Lord set an end to *darkness*, to the times of sin, and the man of sin, and the reign of death, and the kingdom of wrath; which being now old and ready to vanish, and the power arising whereby it shall be done away; which is the breaking forth of the light of this bright and glorious counsel and design; which being backed and assisted with the life and glorious appearance and reign of the Prince of Life, who is ordained for this end, to vanquish and abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light, and doth it by the gospel; shall make it impossible for death and hell to hold, or keep back these prisoners any longer; even as the light arising upon the heaven, sets free the prisoners of night. Our Saviour when he was lock'd up in the grave for sin,



made it too hard a work for the pains of death to detain him, after the third day, the day of his glorious light was risen upon him; which was as great a work as to release the damned out of hell: for he had the sins of the whole world upon him. Yea, I will say that if this light did once shine out upon the damned, and that after that, they should continue in a local hell, yet hell would be no more hell unto them; nay it would turn hell itself into a heaven, and make very darkness itself to be all light about them, as David speaks of the light of God's gracious presence, Psalm cxxxix, from verse 8 to 13.

## CHAPTER XII.

The Objection drawn from the Unpardonableness of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

I SHALL set down the argument in the words of our Saviour himself, Mark iii. 28: "Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."

This (*never*) is expressed distributively, Matth. xii. 31. "Neither in this world, nor in the world to come." So also Luke xii. 10, you have the same words recorded, as to the substance, besides many other scriptures which hold forth the deplorableness and the irrecoverableness of falling away after being once enlightened, and tasting the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, as Heb. vi. that "it is impossible to renew such to repentance;" with the demonstration and illustration of it, for that they "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame;" and therefore as the ground that after all culture brings forth briars and thorns is nigh to cursing; so their end is to be burned. So also the apostle speaks of wilful sinning after men had received the knowledge of the truth, that "there remains no more a sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary," Heb. x. Which he illustrates by a comparison with such as despised Moses's law, and the remediless of their condition who died without mercy; "of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, that hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?" Where it is put to men themselves to judge of the equity of this proceeding. There are many other places, as in Peter and Jude, that speak of trees twice dead, plucked up by the roots, and of such whose latter end is worse than their beginning; and John, that sweet apostle, that is so full of love, he tells us of a sin unto death, of which he saith, I say *not* that ye shall pray for it.

Now the argument is plain, if any be excepted, be it but one man, one sinner in the world, all that we have said falls to the ground, that's clear.

Before I come to answer this objection, I must enter this caution, that what I have said, and shall now say, is not to plead the cause of such wilful, desperate, and despateful sinners. God forbid any man should take that task on him, where the Spirit of God doth not command us to pray, that we should be bold to plead; they are not qualified for any such favour, nor are they capable of being qualified or softened by it; if the blood of Christ will not mollify them, nothing will; it were lost, lost labour upon them, as to make a black-a-more white: and it is against the course of God's justice, for men to endeavour it.

But yet this lays no restraint upon us, but that for God and for the truth's sake, the truth may and ought to be spoken: what therefore I here shall say, is for the making good the argument I have in hand, and for the glory of God and his rich grace which is concerned therein.

I answer therefore not by denying any thing of the antecedent, but the sequel, and so I deny the argument; the antecedent is most true, some sinners have never forgiveness, but the illation is false, that therefore they shall never be saved. And so the objection lies equally against all that go to hell, they are not forgiven; yet after all they may be saved, though I grant there is a great difference between the sin against the Holy Ghost and all other sins; for there is not any besides, but men that have committed it may be brought to repent of it, and so may be saved; but this sin precludes repentance; and therefore as there is also a great difference in the degrees of punishment even in hell, so these shall have the lowest and hottest place in that lake of fire: yet this militates not at all against our hypothesis, that they as well as others, I say not as soon as others, but as certainly may some time or other be saved, and plucked out of that burning.

For let us consider our Saviour's words: "They shall not be forgiven:" *they are not forgiven that are cast into hell for their sins.*

*Obj.* But their damnation is said to be eternal, and it is said, they neither shall be forgiven in this world nor in that which is to come.

*Answer.* But both this world and the world to come have an end. The end of this world is at hand; how long the next shall last is uncertain; but it is probable it shall last longer than any man living upon earth; which you know in the old world was almost to a thousand years; nay, longer than any of the monarchies ever lasted: if it be meant that during all that space they shall lie under this fiery indignation, it is a great while. The meaning I conceive must either be that; or else to shew that though in the world to come, in Christ's glorious and visible reign on earth, when he shall be a priest upon his throne, there shall be the exercise and demonstration of greater grace than ever was in this world, (as many Scriptures show there shall, for "he will cleanse their blood that he had not cleansed; and a fountain shall go forth from the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim") yet the

grace how immense soever (as the waters of the sanctuary when they were grown to a river impassable) all that water will not wash away the guilt of this sin; I say, either of these senses gives no hopes of forgiveness to this sin, which bars all possibility of repentance in him that commits it. You will say then, how shall they be pardoned? I say, they are not pardoned, but must bear their sin during this world and the world to come. But unless any Scripture holds forth that they or any other sinners, (and if not they, sure not any others) shall bear their sin beyond the term or period of the world to come, then their punishment must end, where the world to come ends, viz. when Christ gives up the kingdom to the Father; for the world to come is the glorious state of Christ's Mediatorial kingdom, Heb. ii. 5. And if the continuance of it be so long and until then, I see not but this may give us the account and the meaning of that never-forgiveness, and that eternal damnation which is denounced against this sin; the word eternal being the same (as all grammarians know) that is used for this world or age, and especially if we take in another notation, viz. that this fire is kindled by the breath of the Eternal God who liveth for ever, as the prophet saith of *Tophet*.

*Obj.* But you may yet say, if they have never forgiveness, nor are ever pardoned, how shall they ever be saved, especially when they lie out of the reach of repentance?

*Answer.* You must answer with our Saviour, when he had said, "it was as easy for a camel to go through the eye of a needle," (which some say was a gate in Jerusalem called the *Needle's-eye*, being of a narrow oblong figure) yet saith he, *what is impossible with man is possible with God*; especially if we take in that consideration that he hath the times and seasons in his own power, and hath appointed and set them. And therefore,

2dly, When the set time is come for the determining of wrath and punishment, it then ceases of course. But yet,

3dly, There must be a legal publishing and proclaiming thereof as by the trumpets in the year of jubilee, which is the reason of that language used by the spirit in many places of the prophets, and in the New Testament, as 1 Cor. xv. "for the trumpet shall sound," which is the publishing of this gracious, this glorious counsel of God. The year of jubilee began the first day of the seventh month, which was the beginning of their year; and therefore from that day the servants did eat, and drink, and rejoice, and wore crowns or garlands in token of their freedom; yet they went not out actually from under the hands of their masters, until the trumpet sounded, which was the tenth day of that month, then was their universal freedom published, as Mr. Ainsworth observes, and interprets this sounding of the trumpet, of the preaching of the Gospel. This trumpet was sounded, say the *Rabbins*, first by the *Sanhedrim*, and after that every master was to sound throughout the land, to publish that liberty to his servants. This was done on the tenth day, because that was the day of atonement, signifying their lib-

erty owed itself to the atonement, which our Redeemer hath made for us, and he is the great publisher of it; and therefore we find the trumpet at his mouth, *Isa. lxi.* proclaiming this "acceptable year of the Lord."

*Obj.* But it will be yet objected; these wilful sinners, and those that have sinned against the Holy Ghost, have forfeited the benefit of Christ's redemption; why else is it said, there remains no more sacrifice for sin?

*Answer.* It is true, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, to be delivered up from the tender hands of a crucified Saviour, into the hands of the living God; yet this living God is the same Jesus, though in another appearance; for God even the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, and therefore we read of the *wrath of the Lamb*, and the *wrath of God who liveth for ever and ever*, Rev. xv. 7, and our God is a consuming fire, and the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire. The other Scriptures as well as this last, do all intend Christ, and they intend Christ not dealing with men, now in this appearance, as in his first, when he came as a priest to pour out his blood for them with wooings and entreaties, but avenging the slighting thereof as a king, therefore he now dies not for them any more, he did that once; but he lives for ever and ever, and by the power of his life he judges and brings them under; but still I say it is the same Jesus. That's one thing. And,

2dly, They are still said to be his people even under this judgment, *Heb. x. 30.* Immediately before the apostle sounds that terrible note in their ear, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" he prefaceth it with this, "the Lord shall judge his people," which was spoken to, and of *Israel*, Deut. xxxii. 36. And good reason, he ought to have a title to them, for he bought them with His precious blood. Now though they may forfeit their own interest, yet they cannot extinguish His right. So the Lord saith in *Ezekiel*, *all souls are mine*; where yet he speaks of souls that die by their iniquity. Therefore,

3dly, The case of these sinners seems to be the same with those servants that went not out free the seventh year, whereof we read, Ex. xxi. It was the first law that was given after the ten commandments almost, that every *Hebrew* servant should go forth free the seventh year, but if he despised his liberty, (that is in effect the language, of his loving his master better than his freedom) he was to be brought to the Elders and to be bored through the ears with an awl, to the post of the door of his master's house, and was not to go forth the next seventh year, nor the next, till the year of jubilee; and then he was to go forth notwithstanding. And the reason given is, because the children of *Israel*, be they bond or free, were the Lord's servants, and therefore must know a time of liberty, let them sell themselves away how far soever; and so "the land must not be sold for ever: for the land is mine," saith the Lord, Lev. xxv. 23. "and ye are strangers and sojourners with me;" yet their servitude to the year of jubilee is called, a serving for ever. Upon which Mr. Ainsworth, hath this note on the place:



"that as their *ever* ended then at the *jubilee*; so the other legal ordinances, which are commanded to be kept for ever, had also their end at the *jubilee* of the Gospel; and the *Jews* who urge the observation of them, may be answered from their own writings, as he quotes *Rabbi Menachem* on the place, saying, it is a known thing that this word (*Legnolam*) for ever, is sometimes spoken of a determined time, as Ex. xxi. 6, he shall serve him for ever, viz. unto the year of *jubilee*, and sometimes it is spoken of length of days without knowledge of their limit, but yet they have a limit and end, as when they said, let king *David* live for ever."

If it be said, the case of the *Jews* was singular, all men are not upon that advantage. They were the people of God, nationally, by the express choice and covenant of God with their fathers. I answer, that therein they were but a typical first-fruits of the nation, and their land, of the whole earth; and therefore it is said, *the God of the whole earth shall be called*.

Now let us consider, if all souls be the Lord's, and upon that account are not to be servants for ever, then none are to be excepted. And indeed consider but the value both God and Christ puts but upon one soul, preferring it to the whole world: And what shall be given to the Lord in exchange for so many millions of souls lost to him for ever; as the vulgar opinion holds. Besides that it is sin and not man, (not the creature of God, the soul of man) that is God's enemy, the apostle stating it so, Col. i. 21. *Enemies by wicked works*, sinners as sinners: not as men, but as committers or lovers of wicked works. Therefore the fiery indignation shall devour the adversaries, *quatenus* adversaries, not as the creatures of God; and if sin could be dealt with, out of man it were another case, but it being in itself a privation, it must be judged and punished in the subject, as you cannot bury death out of your sight, but by burying the carcase, so sin is condemned in the flesh, and the flesh is judged in man: If God should suffer sin ever to embondage man, where were his love? Man were for ever lost. But if in the destroying of sin God should forever abandon man, what difference is there? If hell never have end, sin can never have end: for if they live under wrath endlessly, sin is thereby perpetuated, but if sin be destroyed, the same moment man is saved. So that if God hath a mind, as he hath, (his holiness carrying him to it) to exterminate sin, it must be the salvation of the sinner. Therefore it seems to me, that if the Lord do not annihilate all wicked men, they must be allowed a return sometime, (though at what time I determine not; save at or before the delivering up the kingdom to the father) to their first state which they had in the fore-knowledge of God, and in their first parents before sin entered.

These are but the soft and low whispers of that trumpet, which in due time our great high priest the Lord Jesus shall set to his mouth, and with a loud and shrill sound shall publish through the earth and heavens; yea, and through all those dark regions of death

and hell wheresoever this *jubilee*, and with it the power of his endless life, the spirit of life shall go forth from him, to quicken those inhabitants of death and hell, not to torment them any longer, as it hath done at first, and will to the last, avenging on them the despising of his grace; but then comforting them with the opening and disclosing the whole counsel of that grace, that was shut up in this womb of wrath and darkness, and sealed up in death. This is the interpreter, one of a thousand, that will shew unto man *His* righteousness, as the strength of His plea, not only from the nature of God who is love, but from and by reason of the counsel and the will of God, and this delightful project which will answer and resolve all the harshnesses and difficulties that seem to be in it, through our not looking to the end thereof. We see now but through a glass darkly, we know but in part; but Christ knows the whole of the case and will argue it, and plead it with such strength and advantage for every lost soul, that he will carry the day, and all those whom he reconciled by His death, will He first or last save by His life. Therefore as this is terror to fall into the hands of the living God, this ever-living Jesus; so after the judgments finished and the wrath executed, there is mercy in the issue, and as it is said to *Israel*, there is hopes in thy end; that all the lost children of *Adam* shall again return to their border, to their estate, in the favour and love of God, through the death and through the life of the Lord *Jesus* who was dead, and that for them; and is now alive, and that also for them; and behold he lives for evermore to make effectual the whole intention of His death, (however devils and men themselves against themselves have done their uttermost to frustrate it) and with and above this, his own concern, fully to uncover and declare His Father to be *love* throughout, and to be that light in whom is no darkness at all.

### CHAPTER XIII.

A further clearing of the foregoing argument, from the great advantages Christ has to accomplish this work in His second appearance.

THIS will be much clearer if we consider that Christ hath a *second part* of his mediatory office to perfect at his next coming; which is the greater part, viz. the most powerful, though not the most costly or painful to himself; for so the first part was, being performed through great sufferings and death, in a state of humiliations: But now he comes as a king, not to entreat but to command, and to put life into his commands by that all-sufficiency of power he is invested with.

That this is the greatest part even towards his own saved ones, viz. the elect, that are the first-fruits of his creatures, appears, because even they are saved in hope till then, as the apostle shows, Rom. viii., and hope that is seen is not hope, therefore saith the apostle, Gal. v. 5, "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness through faith."

Though we be justified persons in the present time; yet the glorious fruits of our justified state appear but in part and darkly, and we are saved, but in a mystery. Full many, and those great and glorious things are spoken of the city of the living God, of an absolute immunity and freedom from the guilt and power of sin, and all the consequents of it; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be: Therefore Christ's intercession in heaven and the intercession of his Spirit in our hearts relieves and helps us in this state of infirmity, watching over those enemies which yet remain in the land; over-ruling them, and bounding them, and turning that to good, which they attempt and practise to evil. And thus it will be till Christ's second and glorious appearing; and whether that of the apostle spoken of the prophets and worthies of the old time, that looked into the glorious promises made to the time of the gospel, but saw not the accomplishment of them (God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect) may not be applied here, viz., that it is not the will of God that we should be perfect, 'till that better thing, relating to the whole creation in Christ's second appearance be ready, I leave to consideration.

But if it be so that the perfecting of the saints by the actuating their complete form, and actualising of all these privileges and glory confirmed and sealed up to them in the blood of Christ awaits another season; even this second appearance of Christ, what marvel is it, if the rest of me be deferred to that season, for the reaping the fruits and advantages of his death: Wherein else have the first-fruits the pre-eminence, the world enjoys their good things here, whilst the saints receive their evil things.

Now that this is so, that the saints are adjourned to this season for the perfecting of their but inchoate salvation, is clear from many scriptures, Col. iii. 3; Eph. i. 10. chap. iii. 3; Rom. v. 10; Heb. 9, last, 1 Pet. i. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 49; 2 Thes. i. 6, 7, &c. with many others, besides what was named before.

2dly, The second thing to be shown is the great advantages our Lord Jesus is upon for this great work in his second appearance, over what he was in his first, which lies in such particulars as these:

1. He comes as a King.
2. As a Heavenly Man.
3. As a quickning Spirit.
4. In the full revelation of the Father.

I shall gather them up into two heads.

1. His office which he comes to discharge. And

2. His qualifications for it.

1st. He comes as a King, in the full exercise of his kingly office on earth, which he hath exercised only mystically and in heaven hitherto. Remarkable is that word of our Saviour, my Kingdom is not now from hence; implying that now is not the season of it, but it is to be shown in its proper times, as 1 Tim. vi. 16, viz., at his second coming. Not but that he comes then as a priest too, for he shall be a priest upon his throne, it is said, Zech. vi. 13. But the office he comes emi-

nently to discharge, is his kingly office, which is to enforce his other offices: "For where the word of a king is, there is power," saith Solomon: Therefore it is said, thy people shall be willingnesses in the day of thy power, Ps. cx. 4. As who would say, no sooner shall Christ speak and intimate his will, but it shall be complied with.

Yea, he comes not only as a King, but as God's King; not in his own interest and behalf only, but his Father's, to bring back his creatures to him. Therefore,

2. It being his Father's work, he sets him forth and sends him with a most splendid equipage in his own glory and the glory of all the Holy Angels which attend him in this expedition from heaven. Christ hath a glory of his own which is surpassing resplendent, but when to this shall be joined his Father's glory and the Holy Angels', how great will this three-fold glory be! You have them altogether mentioned in this coming, Luke ix. 26. First he comes in his own heavenly glory as the Lord from Heaven, as much exceeding the glory of the first Adam in innocency, as heaven exceeds earth. The first man was of the earth earthly, (though fine earth, yet earth) but the second man is the Lord from Heaven. And therefore this second man's world and Paradise shall as much exceed the first, as heaven exceeds earth. Well may it then be called a New Earth. You read how Christ's face in the transfiguration shone as the sun, and his very garments were white as the light, whiter than any fuller on earth could make them: This was but a scheme in the days of his flesh, a scheme of his glory during his humiliation. Now that glory itself will present itself, and that not for a moment, but for continuance.

3. He comes as a quickning spirit; the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickning spirit: called last, not second as before; because this will chiefly appear in his last coming. Now the spirit is life, saith our Saviour, and it is the spirit that quickeneth. This is that life we shall be raised by, so assuredly that the apostle brings it with a *much more*, Rom. v. 10. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled shall we be saved by his life." Now this is that which none but the elect have tasted the power of 'till this time, and they but tasted it. Indeed temporary believers may taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, viz. in gifts and common graces, but they never tasted of this life, for if they had they could never have fallen away; this is that the tree of life in Paradise was a figure of, which if Adam had eaten of, he had lived for ever; the Anti-type itself appears in the New Jerusalem, and there, with a river of water of life, both which are prophesied of before by Ezekiel; the leaves of the trees are for medicine for the healing of the nations, the fruit for food. Christ, this tree of life, hath leaves as well as fruit. Leaves are the rich clothing or ornament of a tree, and preserves and shades the



fruit, and those that come to the fruit. Christ will not confound but heal the nations, and by these leaves dispose, purge, and prepare them for the fruit; so the Sun of Righteousness is promised to arise with healing in his wings. Not but that Christ will confound his enemies at the beginning of his second coming, those especially that he shall find in actual hostility against him; but when that work is over, then he will address himself to healing, even those whom he hath wounded, and to make alive those whom he hath killed. So likewise the river of life, spoken of in Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9. It is said, that these waters were down into the desert, &c., and being brought forth into the sea, the waters (even the waters of the sea) shall be healed, and every thing shall live whither the river cometh: What more barren than the desert? And the sea is an emblem of the wicked. But what cannot eternal life do, the life of God, when he shall no more stand at the door and knock, but shall work within, shall be a *vis intus agens* as the plastic or formative virtue, or as the soul actuating or forming the body? Such is the force of that word, Eph. iii. 20, which speaks but of that which is the saints' experience in this dark time, yet they feel an energy *quod significat intimam presentiam, vim and efficacitatem qua Deus intime omnia operatur*, say the critics upon these words.

In this day of his second appearing he will be all life. The denomination is of the greater and better part; but here the whole throughout is all life, Col. iii. 4. When Christ who is our life shall appear, &c., and that life is Spirit, all of him is Spirit, from his incarnation, his conception, his birth, to his cross, his obedience unto death, it is all Spirit, and leavens the whole mass of human nature; and so his resurrection, his exaltation and glory, it is all Spirit, and shall now so appear, there's the accent; he hath been so all along before a few in an enigmatical dark way, but he will be so now manifestly, openly, universally; therefore as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive, for he is the Lord, the Spirit; his words are Spirit and life, he said it in the days of his flesh; but now it shall appear; his flesh was then meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, but now it shall be justified in his spiritual body. This is that great Transmutation, the true philosopher's stone, which men have been hunting after; the Transmuter, the Transformer that hath given a taste of his virtue and power in the elect all along, and but a taste, to what shall then appear; therefore we read of that change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Spirits have power over matter and work in an instant. I say not this shall appear in all presently, but in every man in their order; first in the first-fruits, then after judgment hath had its course (which, how long that will be, I cannot determine) but before the delivering up the Kingdom by the Son to the Father, he will manifest this power upon the whole human nature. This I am led to apprehend and believe from plentiful evidence. But,

Fourthly, and lastly, he shall appear then in the glory of the Father also; not only as a

quickning Spirit (which as a man and Mediator he is made) but as God co-essential with the Father, exercising the same creating power as God that quickeneth all things, and to whom all things live, as our Saviour himself saith; as the Son of man he hath all power given him in heaven and in earth, power over all flesh, and to quicken whom he will, which is a larger power than he did own or exercise in the days of his flesh, but shall then come into the full exercise of it; but as God, he comes forth in the original right of that power with the Father; and so he speaks and 'tis created. As man he is anointed with the name, the virtue of the Father; but as God he is the very name and anointing itself, and the power to declare and manifest this name, this virtue to the full; to show all men plainly and fully of the Father, and to exhibit and show himself *as he is*; and so shall every eye see him, for he will be both light and eye, and object to every man; in this light we shall see light, yea they also *that have pierced him*, which of all sinners should most likely be debarred this cheering sight; and lest we should think it restrained to the Jews, it is added, that "all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of him;" which is an expression of a mourning of compunction from a spirit of grace, not from despair, but as in Zachary, for an only son, and a first-born, and this shall all the tribes of the earth do.

And that which shall influence them to this, and thus melt them down, is that glorious revelation, that clear exhibition he shall make of himself and of his Father. This is the message, saith the apostle, that we have heard of him, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, and in another place, God is Love; but then he shall deliver it not as a message, but reveal it as a light of glory within us, and round about us, taking off the vail both from the face of the Father and his own face, and from off our hearts; that which we have not heard shall be told us, that which we have not seen shall we consider; this is implied in that promise of seeing him as he is, Isa. lii. 19, intimating a disguise hath been upon him hitherto, which shall then be cast off, and the design of the whole shall break forth and beautify every part, every step in this glorious project.

*Obj.* But it will be objected; we make Christ kinder than he makes himself in his next appearing, for he saith in that place before quoted, Luke ix. 26, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."

*Answer.* This is not denied, but that Christ's appearing will be to the shame of enemies and apostates; and many shall rise, not only in that metaphorical resurrection in Daniel, but in the proper resurrection of the body, to shame and contempt, and that everlasting in the sense we have opened before, and to the resurrection of damnation, as our Saviour himself witnesseth, John v. 29; but all this hinders not, but ere Christ hath finished his work he will bring things to

another pass; that he will not be ashamed and confounded world without end; this seems to be the case spoken to Isa. xlix, wherein the Lord Jesus Christ is brought in as bewailing his lost labour upon the Jews, verse 4. I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain, as he himself tells them, weeping over Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not?" Well, this hath cost them dear, Isa. xxix. 22, 23; chap. xlix. 18, 24; chap. liii. 10, 11, 12. "Your house is left unto you desolate; and henceforth you shall not see me" (as for above seventeen hundred years hath been verified upon them) "until ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Is here not a revolution of grace and favour intimated to them? so in this text, Isa. xlix. 4; after that bemoaning of himself, I have laboured in vain, he takes heart again in these words, "Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." What judgement is that? Why the same prophet tells us, not only in the sequel of the chapter, where the Gentiles are promised to make up the loss of the Jews, but chap. liii. 10: "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." And is not every man the travail of his soul? Did not he pour out his soul to death for the whole world? And can he be satisfied with less than the salvation of all that he thus travailed of? And if the reproach of the church is promised to be done away from off all the earth, Isa. xxiv, and this is part of the reproach, and a great part ("We have travailed, we have been in pain, we have brought forth nothing but wind; neither are the inhabitants of the world fallen," Isa. xxvi.) then sure the reproach of the head of the church, yea of the grace of God who gave Christ to die for all men, must much more be done away; shall that bring forth nothing but wind, or that which is worse to the greatest part of mankind? Shall that always be under the reproach of barrenness and weakness? Is there not the womb that is called upon to rejoice above Hagar or the law? Shall Christ fail or be discouraged in his enterprise, of abolishing death and bringing life and immortality to light? Or shall he do his work but in part, when God hath given him power over all flesh, that all that he hath given him (for so the words are to be rendered, or the whole, viz. the whole mass or lump of human nature) he shall give eternal life unto them? First indeed, to the first-fruits only, which are the elect, but in due time to the rest, one as well as the other, as the Lord promised to the land of Israel in their time of restitution, Ezek. xlvii. 14: "You shall inhabit it one as well as another. Then is the day when Jacob shall not be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale, but when he seeth his children, the work of my hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name," &c., and Isa. xxix. 22, 23: "Yea, they shall see and flow together, and their heart shall fear and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted to thee," &c.,

Isa. lx. 5, which places have a beginning of, fulfilling in the restoring of the Jews, but shall have a further fulfilling ere the close of that glorious day of Christ's reign.

To conclude this evidence from Christ's glorious capacity, to make this universal and wonderful change, even to make all things new upon his throne; he shall therefore be said to come in the glory of the Father (the original glory) because he shall let in the *light of eternity* upon men, and shall so uncover his Father, as he was never yet uncovered, and exhibit and present him, so as he was never yet seen, but by himself, who lay eternally in his bosom; at which brightness all the light we have hitherto rejoiced and rested in, shall be done away, as being but in part, and all those dispensations that we have thought so bright shall pass like thick clouds; those discoveries that we have taken for the face of God, shall be shown to be coverings, and all times and dispensations of times of this world, which have like Peter's sheet been let down from Heaven for us to look upon, having served their season, shall be taken up into Heaven, and time itself shall pass into eternity; and nothing shall enter or remain there but that which was before this corrupted world, for all things were good in the beginning.

I shall close this section with that of the apostle, 1 Cor. ii. 7, to ver. 10, which takes in the substance of all that hath been said upon this head; the words are these: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory," &c., in which last words the apostle drops an apology or excuse for the Princes of this world not receiving Christ, though it be not the scope or drift of the apostle, I grant, for that is another thing; neither doth it excuse them *a toto* as they say, either guilt or punishment, but *a tanto* only; the excuse is the same as the apostle grants elsewhere, in the case of the Jews, Acts iii. 17, and that is ignorance: "I wot brethren, through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;" and yet it is the judgement of many, and those men of note, that the Scribes and Pharisees that pursued Christ to his death, were guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost; therefore it was not simple or total ignorance, but the want of such a knowledge of him, as is given to the elect by effectual calling, and we are told in this text what it was; it was an ignorance of the Lord of glory, and the occasion of this their mistake, and not discerning, was the veiled appearance in which he then was, during the state of his humiliation, his glory but sparingly then shining forth; it not being the season of it; as it is not for the saints, yet to shine forth until Christ's second appearance. And therefore, saith St. John, 1. chap. iii. 2, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew not him;" only the spirit reveals him to the elect in the present time. But then in his second coming the case shall be otherwise, as ye have heard, and this will be not only a spiritual revelation of him, as never yet was



to the most eminent saint for fulness and perfection, but his person shall be revealed in a visible glory, beyond any created glory of the sun, (or if any thing else were more glorious) and this bodily or visible glory shall be also all spiritual, yea all spirit; shall then impress the mind as well as the senses, and shall work with his spirit to the causing a submission to him, and a reception of him. And until such reception, it will be a torment intolerable to every creature that stands out against him, or is not in union with him. So the grace and sweetness of Christ in his divine excellency, which shall then shine forth in its strength, and shall pierce even to hell itself, will be the torment of the damned in hell, while they abide there, and when the Lord hath finished that work, then will he turn the other side of this glory upon them. For as the pillar of cloud and fire, it hath a light and a dark side and that shall revive and comfort those whom the other side did cruciate and afflict; - and so shall there the highest proof be given of the truth of that word, Deut. xxxii. 29, "I, even I am he, and there is no God like me. I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I heal;" &c. The same God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, God man, by the same life and glory of his second appearance and last coming, shall both wound and heal, first kill and then make alive.

The punishment of the damned is distinguished into *Pœna Damni* and *Pœna Sensus*; and this punishment of loss, the sense of it (for that they shall have) is as great as the sense of pain; therefore our Saviour tells the Jews, as an aggravation, that many shall come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven, and the children of the kingdom shall be cast out, Math. viii. 12. And O! What weeping and gnashing of teeth will this occasion! Thus Dives lifted up his eyes in hell, and saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Now, to make this punishment of loss exquisite, they must have a knowledge and sense of the glory and felicity of the saved ones, such as they had not while in the body here. Therefore they shall be enlightened by this glory, in which Christ shall appear to a sense of what they have lost, and therefore this glory shall appear otherwise to them than while on earth; then they dispised it, choosing their own will and pleasure before it, nay, looking on God and Christ as the darkest and most melancholy objects in the world, and as seeking themselves, and tying up poor man from the best enjoyment of himself, as the tyrants of this world; but when God shall appear in this glorious revelation of himself in Christ, in this time, all love, all light without darkness! O how unspeakable will the torment be, to be shut out of this bosom, these embraces! to want an interest in this life, in this pleasure! in this joy! O how will this set them a weeping and wailing! As on the other hand it is said, the saints and the saved ones, to commend their own mercy, shall go forth and look on the carcases of the men that have transgressed, whose worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. And

this is one reason of the punishment both of devils and wicked men, being deferred to this time, because this presence and appearance of Christ with the church on earth, is a main ingredient and aggravation of their torment, therefore they are said to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power, 2 Thes. i. 9, (as the times of refreshing also are said to be from the presence of the Lord, Acts iii.) the presence and glory of Christ being the inflicting cause of their punishment; therefore they cry to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, Rev. vi. 16; which if so terrible in that change he made in the Roman empire at the casting down the heathen dragon in Constantine's time, what will it be in that time, when he shall put down all rule, authority and power, and take all into his own hand, and appear on his throne in the glory of his Father!

All this will down; but the revolution, the turning the other side of this glory, and revealing to them and giving them an interest in it is incredible. Yet it having a power to heal and restore, as well as to torment, yea, healing being the proper work and efficiency of it, and the other but occasionally or accidentally, who shall for ever seal up this power and virtue of it, when the nature of God, who is love, doth not do it? We say, that power is in vain that is never reduced into act, and therefore when the great gulf or space of time which God hath set for the declaration of his justice in the punishment of the damned is filled up, and that the piercing beams of this glory that hath shined into hell itself, through their *non-interest* therein, hath fulfilled the afflicting and punishing part; then how easy, how agreeable is it to the Lord to take off those chains of darkness that hold them from any part in it, and to take off that veil, and to let them into the apprehension of this great and glorious counsel of imparting it to them also, and letting them forth into the participation of it! I will not say I have an express text for it; but there is a text which favours such an apprehension, Isa. xxiv. 21, to the end: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord of Hosts shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth, and they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days they shall be visited." What day is this? It is the day of the Lord's reign on the earth, that is manifested from the next verse: "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Sion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Well then, what is the pit or prison, but tophet or hell, chap. iii. 33, (which is called a prison, a place of custody, 1 Pet. iii. 19.) "Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord," (this life, this spirit, this glory of the man Christ Jesus) "like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." But that which I bring the place for is, that after many

days these prisoners shall be visited or found wanting, which sounds to our purpose, that through a visitation of grace, they shall be delivered, when their punishment is fulfilled.

To sum up all; this three-fold quality of glory, as a Heavenly man, as a quickning spirit, and as the Most High God, all speak out love and grace; for what is the glory of Heaven but its amplitude, its clarity, its beneficence and its powerful influence, which are all the signal names, virtues, and properties of love, which as the heavens are large, enfolding, encompassing all things, and taking this globe into its cherishing bosom and embraces, quickning, cheering and nourishing every plant, every creature, with its comfortable warming, fertilizing beams and influences, yea, the binding influence of *Orion*, is for the advantage of the earth and plants, and of the bodies of creatures, digesting the cold raw humours, and by an *Antiperistasis* making the innate heat more intense, and killing worms and weeds that would destroy the seed; and the clarity, the lightsomeness of the heavens, is a figure of this light and serenity of love, and the power and rule of the heavens which these sublunary things can by no endeavours turn from or resist, is the all-charming, all-conquering, resistless power of love, which can prevail when law and threatnings can do nothing. So likewise, he is that spirit, that quickning spirit. Spirits in bodily things are the *apez*, the unity of power, the quintessence of extraction, the combination of all the shattered forces and virtues through the whole extension of a vegetable; so in animals, the spirits are the finest, the purest, the sweetest, and brightest blood: and so in God himself, his love is the spirit of his God-head; there are spirits many, the spirit of bondage and fear, but the spirit eminently is love, therefore the New Testament which sows this love, is called the ministration of the spirit. This was a seal of love I received from a dying saint, who for weakness, could not speak much, but left this with me, that *the Spirit is Love*, which I understood not at that time, so well as I bless God I have done since. And then,

Lastly, God hath recognised himself expressly by the name of Love. God is he from whom all things flow as their original fountain, and as they come from him they are all lovely; in him we all live, and move, and have our being, and all our pleasant and delightful motions. And the very disorder and evil that is broke in, he turns it to good; so that Christ coming in the glory of the Father, comes in the glory of Love, which tenders all his births as a father does his children, and having a power, cures their diseases, and casts none away, for if the man Christ Jesus be heavenly, large, pure, beneficent, if his Spirit be the flower of love, what is God his Father, who is the Heaven of Heavens?

#### CHAPTER XIV.

A further evidence to this hypothesis, arising from the relation and proportion, the redemption of the first-fruits bears to the deliverance of the rest.

This argument we have, Rom. viii. 19. to verse 23, with which, other places also join in testimony, as Rom. xi. 16, and 31 verse.

The words in the former place are these "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God, for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly" (or not by choice) "but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope; because the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

The words contain an argument of the greatness of that glory that shall be revealed in believers, the argument ariseth from the expectation, that the whole creation hath of that time, and the glorious fruits and advantage that shall redound from thence to the whole creation, which is no less than the deliverance of the whole creation, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The force of this argument rests upon two terms.

First, What is meant by the creature itself, and the whole creation.

Secondly, What is meant by their being delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

By the first term (the creature) some understand the creation below man, the sensitive and vegetative creature, plants, and animals, that these shall be made incorruptible. If the text reach these creatures (which I shall not now dispute; it being not to my argument) it strengthens our argument, and is itself an argument *a fortiori* for us. For my part, I take the creature and the whole creation, here, primarily and principally, if not wholly, to intend man, the human nature and kind, and that for these reasons, to omit others.

1st. For that the creature in verse 19, 20, 21, where the apostle speaks of the expectation of the creature, the subjection of the creature to vanity, and the deliverance of the creature, must either be taken, indefinitely, which is equal to an universal, or at least eminently, for that rank of creatures, and for all in that rank, of which the apostle was discoursing, which was of men, for such are the sons of God; who are to be manifested, and in whom such eminent glory is to be revealed; it being no way congruous to leave out the noblest creature, and to give the title of the creature to brutes and plants, as if they only expected this manifestation. &c., but,

2ndly. This is put out of doubt by verse 22, where it is said, "the whole creation groaneth," it being no way congruous nor true, to call beasts and plants (which are but a part, and that less principal) the whole creation. Man may be said to be the whole creation, as by way of eminence, containing in himself the excellencies and perfections of all the creatures below him, and being their immediate and next end to which they are ordained to serve; but to give this title of the whole creation to the inferior creatures, and leave out men, or the greatest part of men, is such a solecism and crime against the dignity of



human nature, and against all order and reason itself, as no man can undertake the patronage of. Nor,

3dly. Can these actions, passions, hopes, that are ascribed to the creature be otherwise than improperly applied, or attributed to the inferior creatures, such as waiting with earnest expectation, or with an out-stretched neck, being made subject to vanity, not willingly? what will or choice is there in the dumb creatures? but these things do properly agree to human nature, which is indued with these faculties of soul, understanding and will, though miserably vitiated, tainted, and corrupted.

4thly. There is another reason in the context which lies deeper and closer; showing what the apostle means by the creature, and the whole creation, viz., all that part of men that lie short of that glorious privilege which believers at the present partake of, viz., the first-fruits of the spirit, for so he opens himself, verse 23; "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies." Wherein he shows that this manifestation of the sons of God, this glory to be revealed in us, is a greater thing than the first-fruits of the spirit. And therefore as well we that have the first-fruits of the spirit, as those that have not the same, even we groan. Now how incongruous and absurd a negation, would this seclusion of the irrational creatures, from the first-fruits of the spirit be, who must first be capable of reason, before they are capable of the spirit. Therefore the apostle cannot, in propriety of speech, sense or argument, be thought to intend (at least primarily) the inferior creation; though what advantage they may have by the restitution of all things as I deny not, so it is not my business here either to dispute or define.

Thus have we gained the first point, which is the main, that by the creation is meant man, (primarily at least) then by the whole creation must be meant all men, every man.

*Obj.* If you say, how do wicked men groan, they concern not themselves about these matters, they are not exercised about them, and when they hear of them they desire them not, they rather desire this world might last for ever, for they have their good things here?

*Answer.* They that have their good things here no doubt desire rather the continuance of the enjoyment of them, than to be stripped of them and go to hell; but how few are those that enjoy such a life of pleasure that do not groan!

But 2ndly. Tell me how the dumb creatures, and how the heavens and the earth do groan, as some do interpret this place, and after the same manner will I show you, that wicked men even in their sins and pleasures do groan, finding shortness and vanity in them. It was a motto which a noble-man wrote over his summer-house in his garden: "There is a weariness in pleasure, as well as in labour." But to answer fully; in that spirit that brought forth the whole creation, in that spirit doth universal nature, which stands in that

spirit, groan, with groanings, in a sense unutterable, or by the ear imperceptible.

The rest is easy, the deliverance of whole nature, of every creature in it, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I shall not enquire how far, or into what degree, but delivered they are to be, and that from the bondage of corruption, and that as a mercy, a privilege, as the object and fruit of this hope; and sure that implies more than the raising of their bodies to judgement, and the immortalizing of them for punishment; for who would not, might he have his choice granted him, desire rather to be annihilated?

But what may be further desired upon this point may be clearer, when we have strengthened and established this doctrine upon its true basis and grounds, which is couched in those words of the creature's earnest expectation of the manifestation of the sons of God, implying that the manifestation of the sons of God, bears the same relation to the deliverance of the rest of men, as the manifestation of Christ in glory, doth to our manifestation in glory, who believe in him, as the apostle saith, Col. iii. 3; which not only leads the way, but hath a casual influence likewise thereto.

And though this may seem strange, yet how to understand the apostle without this supposition I see not, and we are not without other scriptures concurring with us.

For first, we find the Jews under the promise and hope of obtaining mercy through our mercy, as the apostle writes to the Romans, chap. xi. 31, which implies not only an order of time, but of casualty; when the Jews shall see in the Gentile christians recovered from under that apostasy, they have lain under during the reign of anti-Christ; when they shall see Christ by the brightness of his appearing to have destroyed the *man of sin*, to have destroyed the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil spread over all nations, and the churches of the Gentiles clarify into the brightness of this appearance; this will provoke the Jews to jealousy: I say, when they shall see their Messiah in the arms of the Gentiles, or the Gentiles rather in his arms, thus beloved, thus restored and beautified, this will have a casual influence into their recovery; for I can by no means think but it must be some more eminent mercy than the Gentiles have yet found, it must be the restitution of the Gentiles that must operate upon the Jews.

2ndly. We find the Jews recovering themselves into their ancient place and state in the favour of God, will conduce likewise to the opening of the eyes, of those nations that yet sit out of the light of the gospel; as well as it will be the advantage of them that have received Christ before them; see for this, Ezek. xvi. 61, where Sodom and Samaria are promised to be given to Jerusalem for daughters, when God remembers his covenant with her, as in the days of her youth, and establishes unto her an everlasting covenant; which proves clearly it cannot be meant of any time yet past, but is to come.

3dly. This will further and clearer appear to us if we consider, that the elect and those

which are saved in this present time, bear the relation of the first-fruits to the rest of men; and how the apostle argues from that notion in the case of the Jews. And it is as true here if the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, and not for ever to be cast away. If the root be holy so are the branches.

4thly. This would not at all be strange to us, if we did well ponder and consider, that order and subordination that God hath established and revealed, whereby as God hath made Christ the only mediator between him and men: Christ hath in a sort, made these first-fruits of the creation taken from amongst men, subordinate mediators between him and the rest of men. Christ shares the honour of his own work and office with his ministers and servants, making them sub-commissioners, vice-ambassadors under him and in his stead, co-workers, co-builders with God and Christ, and the Lord puts his words into their mouths, to plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth. Makes them his voice in the new creation and calls them Saviours in Obadiah, ministers of the spirit, his battle-axe, his weapons of war to beat down, to demolish the old frame and to judge the world, yea angels; gives nations for them, and for their sakes sends to Babylon and brings down the nobles thereof, and the house of Judah as his goodly horse in the battle, out of whom comes the corner, the nail, the battle-bow; and her governors, like to a hearth of fire in a wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf. And as thus for judgement, so likewise for salvation. Therefore said our Saviour, "As thou hast sent me into the world; so have I sent them into the world." Upon a like errand, with the like commission and power. And as their ministry in weakness is blessed to the elect, so their glory hath a ministry of power committed to it which shall work upon the rest. Whereby it is that they shall be enabled to do greater works than Christ did in the flesh. Which what can it be, but the giving of the spirit ministerially, as Christ himself expounds it, John vii. 38: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This he spake of the spirit which they that believed on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified; but being glorified this promise was in beginning, and the first-fruits shed down on the apostles, but the harvest and full crop of it awaits Christ's next coming and the saints with him, when they shall not only ministerially give gifts out of the spirit, as then was done, even to unsanctified men, (grace being only given by their ministry to them, who were *ordained to eternal life* among the first-fruits) but shall build the old waste places, and raise up the foundations of many generations, repair breaches and restore paths to dwell in; not in the letter, for that strangers shall do for them, but in the spirit, as the words following do show, where it is said they shall be named *Priests of the Lord*, and men shall call you the *Ministers of our God*, Isa. lxi. 4, 5, 6, with chap. lviii. 12.

This giving of the spirit by Christ as a  
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Lord, and that full revelation of times and the works and mysteries of God, was that greater thing that Christ obtained *by going to his Father*, which was his glorification, and from this his exalted state, he is said, now to speak from heaven, Heb. xii. 25. In like manner when the elect shall appear or be manifested with him in glory, (as the word properly is to be rendered) they shall then have under Christ, that full and open vision and revelation of God to carry forth to men. And withal shall be instances, and examples of the glorious truth and efficacy of it in their own persons and spirits, which shall add great force and authority to their words, that with a spiritual energy, as spirits, they shall enter the hearts and consciences of men; thus speaking in a sort from heaven, from the very experience of it in themselves, which shall be visible also to every eye, and shall be able also to give an eye ministerially to those that have it not; whereby through those sharp arrows the king's enemies shall fall under them: yea, as Isaiah saith, shall fall down before them; yea, make supplication, (they are the words in the prophet) as Nebuchadnezzar fell down to Daniel, saying, "surely God is in thee." They shall be sensible of divine presence and virtue in them, which shall bring them over. For the saints shall then appear and work as one spirit with Christ their head, who is one spirit with the Father his head, who is Love, who as rivers of living water shall fill them, and out of their bellies, as pipes of conveyance, next under Christ, shall issue forth to the barren places and seas, that have been so to that time. Though in this with a difference of time and order for some, viz., the survivors to Christ's coming, that have escaped of the nations, those sweeping judgements which shall carry off multitudes, shall be delivered into this glorious liberty, or liberty of glory of the church, at the beginning or commencement of this manifestation of the sons of God, (or at least in the course of their reign with Christ) and these other nations shall be given to them as daughters. Perhaps after a time in which they have been first servants, but the rest, viz., those that were cut off before that time, they may yet be brought back afterwards, before or at Christ's delivering the kingdom to the Father.

If this yet stick, and will not go down, let it be considered, that God in all the dispensations of his grace, hath had respect to the relations of the elect, though but natural, yea though remote, as to Noah's whole family, though Ham was one of them, and to Ishmael, because he was of the flesh of Abraham, and Lot's son-in-law had the offer of preservation. Yea, had there been ten righteous persons in Sodom, all Sodom had been spared for those ten's sake. And in the New Testament, when the heads of families received the gospel, the whole household was baptized. Now the elect being the first-fruits of men, the rest are the lump of this first-fruits, and in some sort are their body and fulness. And therefore as they wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their bodies; so they cannot but have a longing for the redemption of



this their body mystical, even all men. And as Christ will be a priest upon his throne, so these in their out-goings of heart (being like to Christ) unto all their own kind. And as God often hath heard one prophet intercede for a whole nation, (as Moses and others for Israel) how can he deny the blood, the intercession of his own Son, with all his mystical members filled with the love of God, and having a perfect knowledge of it, able to plead and extend it to the uttermost. And as the posterity of the Jews are beloved for *their fathers' sake*, so there is the same reason for the whole human kind to be beloved for the elect's sake, who are the first-fruits and fathers of the rest. And as God appearing to us and showing himself as he is in Christ, makes us like Christ, 1 John iii. 2, so Christ's appearing in his own peculiar body of the elect, and first-fruits, may congruously be judged to be ordained to have the same fruits and effects upon the rest of men. Though whether he call them up to the same degree of glory I determine not: for as the apostle saith, that there is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, another of the stars, and one star differs from another star in glory; so also he saith, is the resurrection of the dead. Yet all shall be rendered glorious, therefore delivered and saved; yea, every eye shall see him, and shall see his body mystically glorified: and nothing so powerful, so operative as glory, the glory of God. Therefore they must be transformed by it, the sight and change are reciprocal, cause and effect to each other, they cannot see except they be changed, as they cannot be changed except they see, they may see to be confounded and shall so, till they have borne their shame. But the operation of glory rests not there. This glory being the glory of love, whose proper work is to save and heal, and to wound only in order to a judicious and orderly healing. Therefore as Christ is the first-fruits of the elect, and God's going forth in Christ is first and immediately in order to their restoration, so the elect are the first-fruits of the creation, and God's going forth through Christ, to heal and restore them, is in order to the saving and restoring of the whole, which are to be delivered into the liberty of this glory. Christ immediately takes hold of the seed of Abraham, but through the seed of Abraham he takes hold of all the nations, all the families of the earth and blesseth them. Let no man think to avoid the dint of this by carrying a *Synechdoche*, a *pars pro toto*. I know not then how any argument can be safely grounded on any scripture, as the apostle doth from a like phrase, 1 Cor. xv. 27, from the word all, Ps. viii. 6, "he hath put all things under his feet," who might not have found a *Synechdoche* there? But they must then be quicker scented than the apostle, for he takes it plainly and honestly, that then nothing is excepted. So in the present case the elect are the first-fruits of his creatures; if the first-fruits be holy the lump is holy. I say, since the lump is not all but a great part; why then, if it be but a part be it never so great a part, tis not the lump: the lump is that which remains. It is but a large first-fruits if it take not in all,

the lump is all; and so the branches take in all; if the root be holy so are the branches; if they be of the humane kind they are branches, though they are not the root.

But that which will decide all is the apostle's own application of this, where he uses the metaphor with a particular aim at the Jews; where he makes the Father the root, and the succeeding offspring, until their glorious restitution, the branches. He doth not say many of them, or the greater part of them shall be restored and saved, as verse 26: "But all Israel shall be saved," and so verse 22, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all." In the like sense are the elect the first-fruits of the whole creation, and therefore do infer the sanctification and salvation of every individual of the human nature.

## CHAPTER XV.

An Argument for this Hypothesis drawn from the Nature of Man, as each Individual is a Compendium and Abstract of the entire Creation; and so not probable to be cast away for ever.

In every individual man is, not only by a figure in rhetorical speech, but in true propriety of speaking, a *microcosm*, comprehending in him all the parts of the microcosm; and that not only whether we consider him a part in the two constitutives of him, his soul and body: but in the whole complex or result of his person consisting of both. For first, in his body he contains all *vegetative and sensitive nature*, and in his soul or spirit all *rational and intellectual nature*, with all the virtues, excellencies, and perfections of both: in which respect it is said, God breathed into man at his creation, the breaths or spirits of lives, in the plural number, that is of all lives, vegetative, sensitive, rational, intellectual.

2ndly. Solomon saith, God hath placed or set the world in man's heart, as a flower in its bed or principle in which it grows. And,

3dly. From hence it was that Adam gave names to all the creatures; and whatsoever he called them, that was the name thereof; the reason of man being the *formal determination of their specific natures*, differences, and kinds. And,

4thly. Our Saviour prefers upon this just account, the soul of man (of one man and of every individual) before the whole world of things below the soul: saying, "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" and therefore the redemption of the soul is precious.

But this will much more appear if we consider the person of man consisting of soul and body; that it is a *unity*, *persona quasi per se una*; now a unity is the *apex*, the conspiration of a multitude, or variety into one point; in which point all lines do meet, and take mutual hold of it, as in a spire or pyramid, or in a centre of a globe.

None but intellectual nature are or can be called persons, God, angels, and men; and it

is by and for this *spiritual* nature that they are thus called, and qualified for this appellation. And therefore in every person, *eo nomine*, as he is a person, the *Supreme Unity*, which is God; who comprehends all things: (all being being in himself in one) shadows and figures forth himself, and presents and seats himself, as in a glass or mirror to be seen and reflected on, in which respect, and for which cause, man is said to be made in the image of God.

Now to bring home the argument; can we think so many *millions* of such precious souls, each of which is an entire world, each of which is worth more than the whole world of inferior beings, should be deemed such vile and abject things as to be *eternally abandoned* of God, and lost forever; never to be visited, never to be recovered to the glory of the Creator that made them? See how passionately the Lord reflects on souls *eo nomine*, as made by him, prescinding from redemption, (which is a new creation,) but merely with relation to their first make, Isa. lvii. 16, "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath: for so the spirits should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." A consequence not to be admitted or allowed; nay not once to be imagined.

For if each soul be a unity, a figure, a shadow of the Supreme Unity (not a dead but a living shadow) and that all lines of being and beauty meet in this *aper*, and unity of the intellectual spirit; no such individual soul can be for ever abandoned; but the whole nature of things must suffer therein, as it did when Christ was crucified: which made a heathen that saw that *deliquium* upon the sun, say, *aut natura solvitur, aut Deus nature patitur*. If so many millions of these intellectual substances be never looked upon, or visited with redemption, not one saint is *completely saved*, for if each spirit be an entire world, all spirits are in each spirit; as the soul is in every part of the body. And therefore as it is said of the body, through the *one spirit* in all the members, that "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it: so is it in the mystical body, which is in union (through this union of the intellectual spirit) *with all spirits*, and the whole nature of things, and therefore those which have the first-fruits of the spirit, do with the creation groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, not redemption of their own particular bodies only, but the redemption of the *universal body*; else they should come short of the creation, and those that have not the first-fruits of the spirit, for they wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. Whence is it that natural men wait for the manifestation of the sons of God? but for their interest therein; because they as seeds shall spring up in that manifestation: for as believers are *Christ's seed*, (the seed of his peculiar mystical body immediately born to him) so are the rest of men *their seed and fulness*; and therefore they have an interest and concern likewise immediately in the quickning of these seeds in due time, till which be done they are not full and perfect. This is most

concisely, yet truly held forth in that scale of the apostle. The head of the woman, (that is in the mystery, the natural creation, *is the man*, the head of every man) *every spiritual man is Christ; the head of Christ is God*; which shows the linking and concatenation, the mutual interest and combination, the entering of one link of this golden chain into the other, *making all one*; all a unity, each running into all, and being all, and all being in each one. Which proves what I said before, that the saints are not fully glorified without the rest of mankind. Nay, that Christ is not full without them, nor the manifestative glory of God himself full and perfect without the recovering the whole. For further satisfaction in this argument, I shall refer the reader to that incomparable and learned pen of Mr. Peter Sterry, in his discourse of the soul, in that excellent treatise of his upon the Freedom of the Will. Though I have yet more to add upon this head of man's being the fulness of the creation of God.

## CHAPTER XVI.

A further Evidence of this Hypothesis, from the Higher Eulogies of Love in the Scriptures.

WHATSOEVER the Lord commends to the creature, he stands forth himself as the highest image and example in it to the creature: this being the highest and most effectual way of commending any thing to another, (especially to an inferior) and the higher the superior is, so much the more forcible is his own practice and example to commend it. God is not as the Scribes and Pharisees that laid heavy burthens upon others, such as they would not touch with one of their own fingers: but when he bids us be holy, he gives us this reason, "For I the Lord your God am holy:" when he calls us to be perfect, he doth the same: "Be you perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Now there is nothing the Lord commends to men so much as *love*; yea, it is love that commends all to God himself, Eph. i. 4. That we should be "holy and without blame before him in love." Love is as the sparkle in the diamond, even in holiness and unblameableness itself: as if holiness and unblameableness had all its beauty, all its acceptance in love, as indeed it hath, for, 1 Cor. xiii. the apostle, after a large enumeration of choicest gifts and excellencies, as tongues, prophecies, understanding all mysteries, all knowledge, all faith, yea all acts of charity, and lastly giving our bodies to be burned, saith, that without love all is nothing: but love is all, and where love is, nothing is wanting; if that love be perfect in kind, there is long-suffering, there is kindness, there is no envy, no vaunting, no puffing up, no unseemly behaviour, no self-seeking; love is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, (which I would rather interpret, comprehendeth all things, for reasons hereafter mention-



ed) never faileth, when prophecies shall fail, when tongues shall cease, when knowledge shall vanish away. In a word, it is greater than *faith* and *hope*; and, Rom. xiii. 10: "Love is the fulfilling of the law," as the apostle shows by induction of several particulars, with a general clause in the end of all; if there be any other commandment it is all *comprehended* in this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." For love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore he concludes, love is the fulfilling of the law. So the apostle to Timothy, 1 Tim. i. 5, saith, love is the very scope, the end of the commandment; which is as much as to say, the fruit, the flower, the perfection of it; yea, so doth the Lord study love, so doth he delight to see love in his creatures, that he designs this image to be brought forth upon the very brute creatures, and the fiercest of them in the restoration, Isa. xi. 6: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the sucking together, and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and bear shall feed them, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."

Now as the Psalmist argueth, "He that made the eye, shall not he see?" so may we in this case. He that teacheth love to all his creatures, and works it in them, shall not he love? Yea, why doth he lay it as a law upon all his creatures: but because it is the law of his own nature and being? for so saith the apostle, "God is love." Not only that he hath love, nor only that he doth love, but that *he is love*. And you can no more separate love from him, than you can separate his essence or his nature from him. Doth God require love of all, yea, *love to all men*; yea, and that we should abound in it, not only saints one towards another, but towards all men, 1 Thess. iii. 12. Yea, that we should love not only our neighbours, but our enemies; bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us; and though we cannot delight in them, yet to forgive them, and not to be overcome of their evil, but to overcome evil with good? And shall the evil, yea, the despite of the creature, set the Creator, who is the very Omnipotency of goodness, so hard, that he shall never overcome it, never recover it into the arms of his goodness and love? Are all gifts and excellencies in the creature, or the creature in these gifts and excellencies nothing without love? Is love the diamond, the sparkle of the diamond, even in holiness and unblameableness itself? O then let us fear to set up a wisdom, a power, a justice, a holiness, a greatness in God, without love! Without love as its ground, its root, its essence, its design, its fruit, its image, its end. Is love the fulfilling of the law? Is all obedience to a letter, without love, lank, lean, and dead? Is not the scope, the end of the commandment given unto man, and is it not *God's end*? The scope of all his ways and works, of all his dispensations and adminis-

trations? Can he be said to have attained his end, to have reached his mark, and to be at rest, till he hath brought forth, and manifested *love to all*; to all his offspring, the offspring of his own bowels; as the nature of man is said to be? Is it the nature of love to bear all things, to endure all things, and is there any thing that God whose name and nature is love shall not bear, hath not borne and endured for us, for and from the worst, the chiefest sinner? Is it the nature of love not to seek its own, and shall God who is love seek his own otherwise, than in the good, the salvation, the happiness of his creature? Doth love never fail? shall it survive and over live prophecies, tongues, knowledge? and shall the wrath and severity of God outlive, outlast his love, his grace, his sweetness? Is love greater than faith? than hope? and *is wrath greater than love?* or is wrath that word which God hath magnified *above all his names*; or rather is it any other *than his loving kindness and his truth*, which is all one with love, Psal. cxxxviii. 2, or his mercy, Gen. xix. 19. Which upon this account may be said to rejoice against judgment, Jam. ii. 13. Yea, shall every creature lie down in love, though their former course hath been rapine and cruelty, and shall God alone set and lie down in *wrath* with the greatest part of the work of his hand? If love be his essence, his nature, how can this be? Nature will have its course; *expellas furca licet*.

## CHAPTER XVII.

An Argument for this Hypothesis, drawn from the Oath of the Angel, Rev. x. 1--6.

THIS other mighty angel is so stiled, either with relation to the angel employed before in delivering this revelation to John, or in comparison with *all the angels of the trumpets* presented in vision before, and it must needs be *Christ*; because the characters which are given to this angel are given to none but Christ in this prophecy, nor any where else. And most probably 'tis to be understood of Christ's coming in his Father's power of dominion and kingdom, in order to reign with his saints. His characters are these:

1. *Mighty* as a distinguishing epithet, we see no difference put between the angels of ministry in the other parts of this revelation, but here and in chap. xviii. ver. 1, and 21, where therefore Christ is intended.

2. His "coming down from heaven," which signifies his place properly to be in heaven, and this to be a *condescension* which is not observed of the other angels, whose office is to be sent *forth* for the good of the heirs of salvation.

3. His being clothed "with a cloud," which signifies his considering of us, for his *excess of glory*; for though the angels are in excess of glory to us mortals, yet they are not presented to us in that excess, as to *need a cloud*, but only Christ.

4. The "rainbow on his head," which is an

emblem of the *covenant* whereof *he is head*, no angel but Christ hath the rainbow on his head.

5. But this is more, *his face* is as it were the *sun*, this ties this expression to Christ, whose character it properly and only is, Rev. i. 16, where we have him so first described in this prophecy, as leading to the understanding of every particular mentioned as they should occur through the book, and teaching us how to apply them.

6. "His feet as pillars of fire." This also is the same with what is given to Christ, chap. i. 15, and to none else in this prophecy.

7. The open book in his hand was his own singular acquiescence, chap. v. 7.

8. His posture, *his prevailing posture* on the earth and sea, *the principles and seats of his two grand enemies*, both the beasts; is the same with that Dan. xii. as is the *enthronement* and the *matter* confirmed thereby, as interpreters do accord.

9. The voice "as of a roaring lion," agrees most properly to him, the lion of the *tribe of Judah*, and is often applied to him by the prophets. And,

10. The seven thunders that utter their voices hereupon, are never mentioned but as proceeding from him and from the *throne of God*, which throne is he, or the *temple of God*, which he likewise is, and the seventh angel, which he likewise is, or at the heels of, chap. xi. 19; chap. xvi. 18; chap. iv. 5. Thus much for the person and his description.

The next thing is the contents of the seven thunders, which John is forbid to write, according to the command given to Daniel, chap. xii. ver. 4, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the word and seal the book, even to the time of the end." Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. What these things were, more than the wonders that were to be accomplished, and the *mystery declared to the prophets*, which should be accomplished in its season, and till then, (though men should be getting a little light, time after time, there would not be yet a full understanding until the time of the end) we cannot divine, unless it were the terribleness of those trials that shall usher in this blessed state of rest, which are such, as the creation never knew, as both Daniel and our Saviour say, and therefore shall pass quickly, and so are forbidden to be written, Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.

But the next words which acquaint us with the *action* of the angel that stood upon the sea and the earth, who lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore there *should be time no longer*, acquaints us with a great mystery, viz. that the whole mystery of God, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets, shall be finished at the seventh trumpet, and with the finishing thereof, time itself shall expire and go out.

Here are two things, and here are two expressions of those things.

1. "That time shall be no more." The word used for time is *chronos*, which signifies protraction of time, until such a period, and differs from *kairos*, which signifies the fit juncture for every purpose. The meaning of time shall be no more, is,

1. That there shall be no longer protraction of those things, which God hath declared by the prophets; but that they shall receive their accomplishment: this is the direct meaning, which is the same with what follows, ver. 7. But there are two things more implied therein.

1st. That time is God's *hour-glass*, which he turns up, and measures the space and order in which his purposes are to be brought about; according to that in Ecclesiastes, "there is a time appointed to every purpose under heaven."

2d. With the accomplishment of those purposes under heaven, time itself expires; not that there shall be *no duration* of those purposes or works, after they are accomplished; but that duration shall not be measured by the *sun or moon*. There is duration in eternity, which always was, and will be for ever; but there is *no measure* of the duration of eternity, because things are there perfect at their full growth; as the body of man, which was brought forth immediately by the eternity, was at full growth; and so were the trees in *paradise*, and so, shall it be at the restitution of all things, when that is absolved and perfected, there shall be no more growth, though an *endless variety* and freshness in the joys of the saints.

2. That all the wonders which God hath determined to bring up upon the stage of this world, is the declaring the fulness of his glory, they are all *bounded within time*. It hath been the confident assertion of some, that there is not any thing that the prophets have prophesied of, but it is to receive its accomplishment before Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father; and I add only this to it, that all that begun with time must end with time. Now all the question will be, whether hell and damnation be included in the *works of time*. 'Tis clear they *begin in time*; for before there was sin, there was no death, and before there were wicked spirits, there were no *hell and damnation*. Now before creation there were no wicked men, nor *devils*; nay, all was good by creation. The devils were angels of light, they were not created devils, nor were wicked men created wicked and evil; therefore it is clear, sin and death, hell and damnation, had a beginning, therefore by the same rule they shall have an end.

*Obj.* It will be said by the same rule, angels and men will have an end, for they are not from eternity.

*Answer.* Creation puts not things *de novo* into being, but gives them a *new manner of being*. There is an eternal class of all things in God, in the *eternal word*; creation only gives them a *temporary state*. So that it is only a state of men and angels by creation, that is *temporary*, not the *substratum*, or ground matter of the being of men and angels. Now this temporary state of men and angels, as well as of all things else, shall *end with time*. This temporary state is their subjection or obnoxiousness to *change and corruption*, by which they, with the whole creation were made subjects upon design, as the words import, Rom. viii.

For the subjector, which is God or Christ,



in hope for the creature, chose it not as those words import.

Which affords us a strong reason for the hope and expectation they have of deliverance by the expiration of their bondage; because God serves himself of them, and his glory of their state and condition, and their pain and suffering in it. And having finished and wrought off this piece of glory, having manifested his wrath against sin, having set off his own immutability and eternity, by the fading and corrupt state of all created beings, he will rest *in his end*, and take off this hard law and condition from his creature, and restore the creature to that placid and quiet rest, it had in his bosom before it went forth from thence.

Now having propounded this sense of *time shall be no more*, let us see what evidence and confirmation we can find for it in the text. And,

1. Consider the *oath* that is here taken, and who it is that taketh it. An oath is for *confirmation*, and therefore it is brought in as ratifying the new covenant, Heb. vi. 17, 18, and it is not to be used but in cases of *moment* that require it, as is the case before us; for it is a great matter, and hard to be believed, that all these *grievous* births of time which have continued so long, *should have an end*, therefore the Lord swears it. And let us mark how he is described in the action.

1. The capacity of the person swearing.

2. The name or power by which he swears.

1. The person swearing, is the angel which we have proved to be Christ, by ten particulars in his description: but his capacity and qualification which gives value to his oath, *is his full conquest* and victory over the earth and sea, which immediately refers to the seat and principles of the two beasts. But they may be taken more largely for the principle of all *mutability* and *corruption* which Christ their angel hath under his feet and tramples upon, and can bind and dispose of it at his pleasure, and can say unto it, *appear no more*.

2. The name and power by which he swears, is by him that liveth for ever and ever, viz. the eternity of the Father. This is that name and power that must remove and displace time and all the disorders of it. This is his name, *Jah*. Ps. lxxviii. 4: "A Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow;" a contraction of that name by which he makes known himself to Israel by Moses, when he sent him to deliver them from Egypt, a type of our redemption by Christ. But there is more than this in the text, there is a reason couched for this period, which God will put to time and all the distresses thereof, in these words, which reflect on the creation of heaven, and earth, and sea, and all things therein by him; as who should say, he that made them, may rightfully dispose of them, and knows how to do it, hath power enough, and likewise hath *love enough to his creature*, that will carry him forth to make an end of its misery and suffering, as it is said of the Leviathan, that no man can tame, Job xl. 19: "He that made him can make his sword to approach unto him." God can deal

with satan himself, and change him from a devil to an angel of light again, as he can make the wolf, and the lion, and the bear to lay down their fierce and ravenous natures, and will do it in the kingdom of Christ. And then,

Lastly. We have the time set for this great and glorious change, and that is *in the days of the voice of the seventh angel*; when he shall begin to sound, then shall the mystery of God be finished, as he hath declared by his servants the prophets: *not all at once* possibly, but in order; for we are told the trumpet shall sound, that is, probably, it shall continue, as it did at Mount Sinai, and wax louder and louder, till it hath sounded out time and all the disorders of it, and sounded into eternity and its blessed and joyful rest.

Thus we see eternity like the waters of Jordan, standing upon a heap very far from the city Adam for time to enter, and those that came down towards the salt sea failed till time had its course, and then shall these waters of eternity return unto their strength, and overflow all their banks again; which might be allegorically intended in that passage from the name of the city Adam, which is the name of the first man, which city is said to be beside, or by the side of Zoretan, which signifies tribulation, and the waters came down towards the salt sea, which was the sea of Sodom, these failed to give Israel passage. Thus as eternity was, as I may say, suspended to give way to time: *so now time must give way to eternity*; as it is said, the heavens must be rolled up as a scroll, and day and night must come to an end, by which the torments of the beasts' worshippers is measured, Rev. xiv. And so possibly, the punishment of all the ungodly, which is for ever, or everlastingness intended by those expressions, not absolute eternity, but an æternity. But the matter bound by this oath is yet behind, which is the main of all; and that is, *that the mystery of God shall be finished*, at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. What is this mystery of God? the word mystery comes from a word that signifies *shutting*, or *moving*, or closing up; so that manifestation of God, which hath filled all times hitherto, is a *veiled manifestation*, glorious within, but with a veil upon it, and coarse uncouth covering upon it, as was upon the tabernacle, yea a *disguise*, a parabolical and enigmatical revelation of God. The light of all times, of every dispensation, hath been the drawing back something of this curtain: the lifting up of some part of this veil which is promised to be quite done away in *the mount of Christ's second or heavenly appearance*, and that when we shall see eye to eye, face to face, and that is finishing of this mystery.

There are two things in it. The light shall be perfected. The darkness that was upon it and mixed with it, shall be abolished and done away, for else how is the mystery finished? The finishing of a thing leaves nothing remaining, so that by the seventh trumpet, or before it hath done sounding, the Lord will have made a *perfect revelation of his wrath and justice against sin*, a perfect

discovery of the weakness and vanity of the creature, and will be risen to the *meridian* of the glorious manifestation of himself. The times of this world are as a parenthesis between eternity *a parte ante*, and eternity *a parte post*, replenished with wonders for the illustration of eternity; but these are shut up within two semi-circles, and having served their season, eternity takes its place again; and as the sense is not broken by a parenthesis, which is read over in a breath, so, and not more considerable, is time to eternity.

We read of many signs and wonders in this book of the Revelations, and many mysteries; the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks, and the mystery of the woman, even Babylon, and all these signs, these wonders, these mysteries, even the giving scope to the mystery of iniquity, and the revelation of the wicked one, the man of sin, are *all subservient* to the revelation of *Jesus Christ*. And therefore the book takes its denomination from thence, and is called the revelation of Jesus Christ, that being the scope thereof, and when they have served their end, then they lie down and appear no more. And this is the law of all things that are not the eternal glory itself, they lie down into their ideas which are in the eternal glory; but there they are as *beauty spots*, not as *contending images*, but as *eternal witnesses* between God and the creature, between *time* and *eternity*, as slain images, as spoils and trophies of almighty and unchangeable eternity, which will give the Spirit of God exercise and trouble no more, but will cast the creature into the arms and bosom of *its only safety*, and hold it in the firmest and most continual dependance on his keeping, without fear and suspicion of ever being abandoned to change more, and will present everlasting occasion of joy and triumph to the all-conquering power of divine love and glory, that hath prevailed against all this weakness and enmity in the creature, and yet notwithstanding, hath recovered it to his own embraces, and fixed it in the immutability of his own blessedness.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### The Fruits and Advantages of this Hypothesis.

ANOTHER Scripture that gives some light to our hypothesis, is in John xvi. 33, where our Saviour tells us he hath overcome the world. If the matter, the manner, the seal and the reason of this victory be rightly opened and understood, it will not only prove Christ's conquest of the world, but contribute also to our present service; for he conquers not as other princes do, to destroy and serve their ambition, but to recover, bring back, and save all that he hath conquered.

1. Then the matter of this victory is the whole world. The world consists of two parts, a light and a dark part; Christ hath conquered both.

1st. The light part of the world, is the first matter of Christ's conquest. God at the be-

ginning set the image of his own beauty in the creation. This image at the fall was defaced and set up by man instead of the true beauty, so it became of an *image an idol*, of a representation a *rebellion*. Our Lord the true light, the essential, substantial, eternal *image*, breaks forth upon it, and breaks it in pieces; so in Col. ii. he is said to spoil principalities and powers upon his cross.

Sampson laying hold upon the pillars of the house, pulling down the house upon the Philistines and himself, was a fair type of our dying Saviour; for thus he falling, takes hold of the pillars, principles and powers, the invisible strengths, glories of this world: so he pulls them, the world and his own fleshly part into one common ruin. Christ on the cross uncrowned and unclothed the light part of the world. The Scripture tells us, that he was the first born of the whole creation, the head of every creature, he was clothed with the supremacy and eminency of all natural strength and glory; but he takes not up his rest here, neither doth apply himself to build up and heighten this natural beauty: but he chooses another title, the first-born from the dead, to enrich the whole creation in both kinds. It died in its natural glory; that he might as the first-born from them the dead, become the head, the foundation of a new creation.

2d. The dark part of this world. This is the second matter of Christ's conquest and victory, 1 Tim. i. 10, it is said Christ by his appearance hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. I will say no more of this here, because I reserve it for a particular discourse on that Scripture.

There are two sorts of darkness, the dark things of *curth*, and the dark things of *hell*; both these are in Scripture comprehended under one name of *death*. The Lord Jesus hath taken away both these deaths out of the nature of things in his own person. The whole world in both parts of it, in the light, and in the dark parts, this world in all its tempting and tormenting forms.

2. My second general head is the manner of Christ's conquest. This is four-fold. Christ conquered by resisting, by suffering, by submission, by divine union.

1st. Christ conquered by resisting, our Saviour overcame by fighting, according to the rule, *resist the devil and he will fly from you*.

The devil made two principal onsets upon Christ. The one by the *dark*, the other by the *light* part of this world. The first was after his baptism, then the devil came armed with the light part of this world. The temptations of the earth, a temple in the latter, a representation of divinity, if thou beest the Son of God, &c. He presented and tempted our Saviour at once with all the kingdoms of this world and their glory: but our Saviour resisted and beat him off, "get thee behind me Satan," immediately upon this all-conquering world, kingdoms, glory, Satan, and all vanished into another appearance.

The second onset was at Christ's death: of this our Saviour speaks beforehand, John xiv. 30, the prince of this world cometh, but he finds nothing in me.



The devil possesseth the principles of nature; by these he conveys himself unto us, and makes us his own. But Jesus Christ was not born in the way of nature, but after a supernatural manner. A divine principle clothed itself with the virgin's substance, grew up in it, made it to subsist in itself, and to be wholly in a divine person; the devil now had nothing of his own in Christ to comply with him, when therefore he came armed with the dark part of the world, having called about him all the black powers of terror and wrath from earth, hell, heaven itself, he meets with a full and strong resistance from Jesus Christ, by which he is beaten down into his depth of darkness below; which he consumed and fired about his head. In this Christ overcame by resisting.

2d. The second manner was by *suffering*.

This world as now it is since the fall, (as it is called in Scripture this present evil world) is compounded of three principles. The guilt of sin. The power of wrath. The frailty of the flesh. These three Christ hath overcome by sufferings.

1. The guilt of sin, 2 Cor. v. and last. Christ is made sin in a flame of wrath in our stead, (or a sacrifice for sin) for us. Christ hath made satisfaction to divine justice: and so taken away the whole guilt of sin in his own person, he is called *Lutron*, a *Ransom*, a balance to the guilt of sin, which makes the scale of justice even again. The sufferings of our Saviour have wonderfully reduced the disorder of sin into order in the eternal judgment of God, as the God-head was clouded by sin in the nature of man: so now it falls in a cloud of vengeance upon the head of all mankind: man aspired by sin to the top of all things; man by sufferings is thrown down below all things to the utmost depths of woe. The image of God was swallowed up into the darkness of sin in man. The image of God now consumes the image of man, comprehends it, magnifies, and makes glorious itself it, by the suffering of Jesus Christ; thus Christ overcame the guilt of sin by suffering.

2. The power of wrath. The prince of this world reigns by wrath. Christ draws the whole force of wrath upon himself. To spend itself on him the devil now is made a *drone*, having shot his sting into our Saviour and lost it there; thus Christ by death destroys him who had the power of death; Heb. ii. The Psalmist saith, "Deep calls to deep;" the deep of wrath touches upon the deep of love and glory. God is the beginning and end, the top and bottom of all things, as the earth is said to stand in the water, nor as to all his saints that are saved, as the first-fruits being love, so this world stands in a sea of wrath; what mere man soever falls into this sea, can never come to the bottom, but is eternally sinking. Christ more than a many times cast himself into it, immediately reached the utmost depths, and reached through it to the glory below it, discovered the foundations of it all in glory; upon this discovery the sea of wrath disappears for ever in the person of Christ, and is seen no more. He was made a curse for us. He did in death

for our sakes and in our stead receive immediately into his own person, into his own breast and heart, the whole curse and wrath.

3. *The frailty of flesh*. Flesh is not sin, but it is the ground, seat, and occasion of sin: it is said the *law* could not give righteousness and life through the weakness of the flesh, Rom. viii. Now we read, 1 Pet. iii. 18, That Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit; so we read it by the Spirit: but in Greek the flesh and spirit do so exactly answer one another, in the connexion and manner of expression, that one would think nothing to be plainer than the intention of the Holy Ghost, to signify that the flesh and the spirit had both the same relation to the person of Christ, in those different states of his dying and rising again; that by his change the spirit came in the place of the flesh, and that the flesh was changed into a spirit as by a natural generation, that, that which was water or air is made fire: the words are these, 1 Pet. iii. 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, (that he might bring us to God) being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." In the same sense in which he died in flesh or to the flesh, so he rises again in the spirit or to the spirit. That same body which died a fleshly, compounded, mortal substance, rises again a simple, pure, immortal spirit: as a small, solitary, perishing seed dies in the earth, that it may rise again a fair, flourishing, lasting tree; so Jesus Christ crucified in the flesh, in its frail and fading form, that he might bring it forth again in a spiritual glory, this is the conquest by suffering.

3d. The third manner is by *submission*; Christ overcame by being overcome, by giving up his will as a captive of love to his Father's will: "Not my will, but thine be done."

It is an approved principle that every thing unchecked in its course, carries that which it lays hold on, all along with it to its own primitive state. The will of God in its proper and eternal state is love and joy. This will meeting with a yielding subject in Christ, first works him into flesh and blood, then into shames and pains: but it stays no longer 'till it hath wrought him up again into its own highest form of love and joy.

4th. The fourth manner is by a *divine union*. This indeed, if I may so speak, is the sleight and skill by which Christ overcame in the other three stratagems, viz. the divine union. This is two-fold.

1. The bringing down of a divine life to be incarnate, to dwell in flesh; Christ founded this union in his birth, John i. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The original word is, *Kai ô λόγος σὰν ἄνθρωπος*, &c. St. John speaks of this union, when he said, he that denies Christ to be come in the flesh, he is *Anti-Christ*.

Q. But how doth this union tend to the conquering of the world?

A. I answer, two ways. 1. By his union the whole world is now transplanted and taken off from its own root, and ingrafted upon a divine principle which possesseth and acts it.

2. This divine principle is a fire in the flesh of Christ, in his worldly person sacrificing and consuming it. "I come," saith Christ, "to send a fire into the world, and what will I, if it be already kindled?" It was already begun in his own flesh, and it is every where such a fire in our flesh, and in all flesh.

Fire with us is a light from the heavenly bodies, secretly conveyed to take hold of dark matter here below, where it contests with the darkness till it consumes it and appears again in its own pure flame of light. Such a fire is the divine life in flesh; it comes not to tarry here, but to kindle us and carry us back with itself: this is the first union.

2. The second union is the bringing up of flesh into the glory of a *divine life*; as Christ founded the former at his *birth*, so he founded this union in his *resurrection*. When Christ was risen, he was still flesh and bones, but he was flesh subdued and heightened to a divine principle: therefore when it pleased it could retreat into the glory of that principle, and become invisible, living after the fashion of an angel. When it pleased it could come forth again in what manner it liked best, and live as men on earth; so it was, as I may humbly speak, a blessed *amphibion*, living both in heaven and earth at pleasure, as some creatures do on the waters, and on dry land. Some believe that at the end of the world, those glorious lights over our heads, shall flame forth with an unwonted force upon all earthly things, and so shall not so much consume as refine them, heightening and uniting them to their own pure beams to subsist together with themselves, and appear from thence after a new manner. Thus the heavenly glory in the person of Christ, breaks forth upon the flesh, glorifies it, gives it a spring and a seat in itself.

It is one great and comprehensive article of our faith, that Jesus Christ the immortal Word, by, in, and for whom all things were created, visible and invisible, hath descended into flesh; by and through his cross, resurrection and ascension, put off flesh, returns to his Father in our nature, which he hath changed from flesh into spirit, making it in soul and body one spirit with God, and yet keeping it in its own propriety, a distinct spirit from him. This same Jesus, as the Lord from heaven, as a quickening spirit, is still descending into the souls of his saints, revealing himself and the Father, there forming himself in them, conforming them to himself, purging them by degrees from all pollution of flesh and spirit, carrying on the fellowship of his death and sufferings, death and resurrection in them, until he completely makes them spirit of his spirit, one spirit with himself and the Father, first in soul, finally at last in body also. Then will be brought forth that adoption of the body of the natural man the apostle speaks of, Rom. viii. 23, *waiting for the adoption, viz. the redemption of the body*; he had spoken before of an adoption of the spiritual man, in ver. 15, where he saith, "you have received the spirit of adoption." Jesus Christ and the spiritual man are already both one spirit; we have already received

him by our spiritual man, into our earthly part; but it is as light into a candlestick, or liquor into a vessel; the candlestick shines by the light of the candle, but it is still dark in itself; the vessel may contain the taste and savour of the liquor, but is not changed into one substance and nature with it; so the natural man receives some light, some impressions and sweet qualifications from the presence of the spiritual man, but it remains naturally in its own dark and sour principle; but then the divine life and glory shall so shine through the whole natural man, that the natural man itself shall be altogether spiritual. This is the *adoption of the body*, the spiritualizing of it, the bringing it out of the earthly into the heavenly image; and now the natural man shall live together with the spiritual man, in one divine principle, and power, and glory to God the Father. Of both these are the four several manners by which Christ overcame the world.

3. The third part, which comes nearer to our point, is the reason of this conquest; which is not, as I said before, to enslave his conquest, his conquered, like other conquerors, but to restore and bring them back, nor hath he truly conquered them until then. This reason of his conquest is four-fold. The salvation of man. The restoration of the creature. The exaltation of Christ himself. And the manifestation of God to be all in all.

1. The first reason is the salvation of man, Heb. iii. We read, "seeing the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also *took part of the same*," &c. We read in that Scripture also, that the work of Christ was to *bring many sons to glory*. These sons were sent forth into flesh and blood; united with their clods of flesh, they were surprised with the devil, and made prisoners, first to the fear of death, and then to death itself. Jesus Christ over-ran and overcame all these, satan, death, fear, flesh, and blood; so he saved us from them, so he brought the sons of God to glory. As the body must first be cracked and fall in pieces before the soul can be glorified; so must this world fall, before good men can grow to their proper greatness and height. The body, and the world are dark shadows, with which our spirits are overcast. Christ, the true light scattering himself into these shadows, dissolves them, and so we appear together with him in the open sun-shine of glory. This seems to refer only to the elect, but it refers to them as the *first-fruits*, for if he had destroyed him that had the power of death, and all what hath been said before, they are not conquered, if he leaves them at last reigning over any, for they were all *re-headed* in him.

2. The second reason is, the *restoration of the creature*, 1 John iii. 8. It is said Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. The vanity and vexation of the creature are the devil's works. Every creature hath in God a divine principle, a divine appearance. As they came forth from God, they were in paradise, all the creatures conspired into one image of the eternal beauty; each creature was the same image in less, *Deus maximus in minimo*; every single creature was an



image of the great God in a little frame. When sin came, the devil spread a secret poison upon the face of the creation. The whole was now become a confused piece of deformity, and every particular an ill-shaped monster, *cui lumen ademptum*. The light of the divine image being withdrawn, Jesus Christ, the brightness of his Father's glory, the unchangeable image of things, bathed the creatures in their blood and in his own, he broke them in pieces, and now casts them up in himself; thus he restores them to their principles, shape, and state. Our Saviour proclaims of himself, "I make all things new." Life hath a depth in it, said a philosopher of old. The life is the only newness and freshness of things. This is still that, which draws forth from its depths a variety and succession of fair appearances, as plants in the spring. This world, as it is now, is a desolate dying thing: our Saviour, who is the first principle, pattern, root, head, and spirit of all things, by his cross kills it outright, that he might put a new spirit and life into it. Thus the apostle brings in, Rom. viii., all the *creatures groaning* for the bringing forth of this state in themselves, which is already brought forth for them in the person of Christ.

3. The third reason is the exaltation of Christ. In Phil. ii., it is said of Christ, that "he became obedient to death." There you have the combat and conquest; the end follows: "Therefore God hath exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord." These are borrowed expressions from the prophet Isaiah, with some change, Isaiah xlv.; that which the apostle interprets here confessing, the prophet there calls swearing.

Q. But what manner of exaltation is this? What name can be above every name? What knee? What tongue? What swearing in things in heaven, or below the earth?

A. I answer, this name is the last and full expression of the first and supreme glory in the person of Christ. The knee is the strength, on which men and beasts sustain their own weight, and raise themselves to their due height. The tongue is that out-form, in which every thing puts forth and declares itself. To swear, is to acknowledge the omnipotence, omnipresence, and sovereignty of that by which we swear, together with the subsistence of all things in it; therefore God swears by himself, by his own life. It was a piece of flattery among the heathens to swear by the life, the head, the genius, the fortune of their princes. Joseph had learned somewhat of this in the court, when he swore *by the life of Pharaoh*. St. Paul reckons that which the prophet calls swearing to Jesus, is confessing that Jesus is the Lord; so then Christ was exalted; every knee bows, and kneels, and yields itself captive to Christ; every form and beauty resigns itself to have its appearance only in his beams; all things own him as their strength, light, life, their

ry: this three-fold. The person of Christ. The person of saints as the first-fruits, and the persons of the whole world.

1. The first seat, Eph. i. 10, we read that God hath gathered up all things in heaven and earth into one in himself. Our Saviour hath, as we may see more elsewhere, a comprehensive and representative person. The Lord Jesus hath a comprehensive person; he contains in himself the principles of time and eternity, this world and that which is to come. When he died in our fleshly part and rose again in a spiritual glory, then was time and eternity reconciled in him in their radical principle. The Lord Jesus hath also a representative person; he bears in his person the image of God and man, heaven and earth. When his earthly man was crucified, then was the whole world crucified and changed in picture. This is the first seat of this victory, the person of Christ; all things are, as I said before, *re-headed* in him.

2. The second seat, the person of the *saint*. The victory of Christ enlarges itself from him to every Christian, as Paul expresseth it in his own design and desire, Gal. vi. God forbid I should glory, save in the cross of Christ, by which cross of Christ I am crucified to the world, and the world to me. The world is become as a carcase to me, if it hath lost its beauty and sweetness, and I am become as a dead person to the world. Every good man hath in his soul a living picture of Christ, and a small landscape of Mount Calvary. Christ is formed in him through faith, and so is the *cross* of Christ, on which a Christian and the whole world within him is fastened. An universal darkness breaks forth, when Christ suffered, and an oriental light encompasses with a full universal glory, where the world and a Christian are seen again, as new created in a diviner shape. This is the second seat of Christ's victory.

3. The third and last seat is general, the *whole world*, 2 Pet. iii. 7: "The heavens and earth which now are, they are reserved for fire."

Q. What fire is this, or who kindles it?

A. I shall answer, 'tis a sparkle of divine glory which sends forth its objects in the bosom of Jesus Christ, flying through the world, feeding itself upon all worldly things till it appear a clear and universal flame. I come, saith Christ, to send a fire upon the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled: this fire was kindled when Christ was born, and burnt out first upon the green tree, the cross which bears the goodliest fruit that ever the world brought forth.

All things still feel the heat of this fire in plagues, disorders, wars, all sorts of miseries, till at last day is turned all into flame; yet is not this fire so much to ruin, as refine things; therefore when Christ hath reduced this old world to ashes, as the phoenix, out of her ashes he will raise new heavens and new earth. This is a general view of the victory of Christ; and if the victory can be submitted to sin, to death, to hell, and wrath, where shall we find Christ a conqueror? But there is no victory to be submitted to death,

hell, and wrath; and therefore I conclude that all these must submit to the conquest of Christ, or he hath not overcome the whole world.

### CHAPTER XIX.

#### The consideration of God, as Love.

My next scripture shall be, 1 John iv. 16: "God is Love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." From this text opened, we shall find (if God be Love, if all his saints dwell in that love, and they dwell in God; and God dwelleth in them) more than presumptions that this text is not true, neither as to God being love, and dwelling in God, and God in them; that God can leave the greatest part of his offspring to be eternally miserable, or that those that dwell in one love with him, can be happy eternally without them. To form my argument from hence, I will take notice of three things in this scripture.

1. We have a most excellent and a right description of God. *God is Love*, and herein a most deep and rich ground of divine love, which is the God-head itself. The divine essence is the glorious mine, the divine bosom, the blessed mint of all true love; God is the first, and fountain-love; there is no true love any where which is not from this first love, which is not this first love itself; for it must be a participation of it. In this love first lies, as in its fountain, and from this love flows all the true love every where else to be found.

2. We have here the blessed character of a saint; he is one that dwelleth in love, in which words we have two distinguishing properties of the true divine love.

1st. The comprehensiveness of this divine love; "He that dwelleth in love", in love absolute, in an unconfined, unlimited and universal love, without respect to this or that, or to any particularizing or limiting circumstance, but in love itself, abstracted from all exception to the expression of that love, a love fixed upon the naked notion of good and lovely.

2d. We have here the constancy of this divine love, "He that dwelleth in love," a dwelling is a constant abode. Love is indeed God's dwelling-place, as well as ours, and in this love, God and all his saints do mutually dwell together, one in another, for so it is said, Zeph. iii. 17, that God rests in his love. All motion in all intellectual agents tends to, and endeth in rest. All the motions, works, and ways of God tend to, and end in love, which is his rest; God in all other appearances and forms of things, is only as the schools speak, *in transitu*, passing through them as a way-faring man till he comes to the full expression of his love, and this is his Mount Sion, his resting-place for ever. Here in the full opening of the mystery of this love, which is himself, he casteth off every disguise, he lays aside every veil; here he is seen naked in the simplicity and brightness of his own

beautiful person; and as he is, which the apostle saith he is not yet our present happiness. Here also his saints dwell, seeing God, themselves, and all things in their eternal forms of divine loveliness, with a beatifical vision. Here, I say, his saints dwell and rest in love, till the perfection of that finishing discovery of God's love. This is their heaven upon earth, their bed of rest; a saint in this love is at home, dwells here at his ease, in rest, in perfect liberty, unveiled in the free discovery of himself, in the free exercise and full enjoyment of his own spirit, at the height of all power, pleasure, and glory, as every man dwells in his own house or like a prince in his palace. A saint, according to this scripture, is never at home when he steps out of this love; he then is out of his place, and carried and held preter-naturally. God is love, a saint is a child of God, a child of love; he is known to himself, and to others, to be the divine seed of the divine love, shining in him; and shining forth from him, like the fountain of his love, which reacheth all things: he dwelleth in love; love is his constant abode; love is his orb and sphere, in which he is fixed, in which he dwells, moves, and shines. It is impossible with all gifts, with all powers of miracles, with all the wonderful expressions of a kindness to our fellow-creatures, with an understanding of all mysteries, as the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. xiii. "To patch up a saint without this love."

3. We have the happiness of this person, this saint, and the heavenliness of divine love: "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him." This love then placeth us in heaven; for while we dwell in this love, we dwell in God, which is to dwell in heaven, and more, if it were possible; and it is so, for it is God that makes heaven, and therefore he is more than heaven; and sure I am, heaven without him would be nothing at all.

Love makes a saint a heaven in himself; he that dwelleth in love, hath God dwelling in him. To be the dwelling-place of God then, as was said before, is heaven and more; and he dwelleth in God. This man must be heaven. God and a saint are two loves mutually, dwelling one in the other, essentially, not by a confusion, but by a union of essences.

To make my way for my strength from this scripture to my present argument, I begin with the first: the excellent and the right description of God in these words, *God is Love*.

He who was the disciple of love, who lay in the bosom of love, and so best knew what God is, declares divine love to be the nature and essence of God. God, saith he, is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.

God is pure love, all love, a God-head of love, as the sea is a heap of waters; "The gathering together of waters he called the sea." Gen. i. As the body of the sun is a pure and simple light, so is God a collection of loves, a gathering together of all loves into one spirit, into this eternal spring, and supreme form; so is God, a sea of love, boundless and bottomless, without shore, bottom, or surface; an infinite ocean of love that can



never run itself dry: so is God a sun, a source of love that can never spend all its light; all the pleasures and joys of love meet in him, are his essence and person, filling all, overflowing all with an infinite fulness and endless variety. He in all the infiniteness of his divine nature, is nothing but love, in its purest, most perfect, most plentiful sweetnesses, with all the richest, the numberless beauties and delights, which love itself, in the infiniteness of its God-head is capable of.

This is the divine nature, a perfect unity, purity, and simplicity of love. This is the sacred unsearchable unity of the divine majesty, the most sacred and supreme love. He is, I say, a perfect unity of love; and so by a necessary consequence, an infinite love for a perfect unity, is positively and perfectly infinite. Unity and infiniteness in truth, signify the same thing; the one by way of affirmation, the other of negation. An entire unity transcendeth all division, all composition, and so all bounds. That which is bounded is made up of different parts, some more inward, as nearer to the centre, and some more outward, remote and extreme, where the whole is bounded. An absolute unity is incapable of being bounded from within or from without, it being simple, pure, unmixed; it is every where itself; and the same equality within itself, equally remote from every thing foreign, from any limit of beginning or end.

I could easily show, how impossible it is for an entire unity to be bounded from any thing within, for then it must be divided into different principles, powers and forms, or parts; some bounded, others bounding, and so also have in itself diversities and dissimilitudes, in its approximations to, or remoteness from its limits. I might also go on, and show, how an entire unity is incapable of being bounded by any thing without; for an absolute unity comprehendeth all things in the most eminent and transcendent manner within itself; and if there was any thing without this unity, there would then be an agreement between this unity and that foreign being in being; inasmuch as both are; there would be also a deviation and difference between them so far as they are not both one, and one lies without the other, and so in this state there would be of necessity a composition of differing parts in the unity, one part in which it agrees with that without it, and the other in which it differeth from it; and so it were no more an entire unity.

I could run out at large upon this metaphysical notion, to prove the unity of love must be an infinite love; but the age we live in, doth not relish metaphysical learning, and I content myself with the pleasure of it to myself.

In God then is an absolute unity of love; and so if I am right in my reasoning, as I believe I am, he is an absolute, infinite love by its essential form; if I may so speak, every way one, one in all things, one with all things, one infinitely above, beyond, and beneath all things, all things in one with an equal property, and infinitely more. Thus is God a perfect unity of love, thus is God an infinite love. This most perfect love, with all its in-

finite, eternal, and all comprehending sweetness, is the only true God.

Our divine apostle speaketh here of love, as the essence of God, and as convertible with God; he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him; that is in plain English, God is love, love is God, God is love itself; the first, the sweetest, the purest, the supreme, the sovereign love, the most absolute, the most incomprehensible, the all comprehending love, love itself, the essence and substance of love; love is God himself, the essence of God, convertible with God; for so this scripture speaks of God and of love, as convertible terms; because we know nothing, as hath been well observed, which so faithfully, so fully, so formally, essentially expresseth the God-head, the divine nature, the divine persons in their distinctions, in their unity, as this name of love. Love is the highest discovery of God to our capacity, as he is in the simplicity of his divine essence. Love is more than an attribute, it is the very name of God, it is God himself. An attribute is an imperfect and a partial expression of God to us; but love is the full expression of him, so far as God can be expressed and conceived by us. Love is the highest, the most exalted name of God; that which the scripture calls his glory, as he is unveiled, unclouded. Love is the universal perfection of the Deity, that perfection of God from which, as I may so speak, all his other perfections are derived, and to which they are all subservient, all the strengths, the sweetnesses, the purities, the powers, the beauties of the divine nature, of the divine persons, they are all concluded and centred in this love; they are no other than this love itself in so many divine forms, figures, and shapes of beauty and blessedness, acting those heavenly parts which make all the joys and glories of love complete in themselves, and in us. God is love, and therefore all his attributes are the attributes of his love. The full number of all the attributes, excellencies, and perfections of the God-head, like the stars in heaven, no one wanting in their full glory, like the sun in its strength, never waxing dim, waning, never in any eclipse or any cloud, never rising nor setting; they are all united and centred in this love, they are all so many several names, expressions, glories, victories, and triumphs of this love, which is himself; or if you will, this love is the predominant attribute that set all the rest on work; it is the triumphant attribute, and the especial matter of God's glory. For although the divine attributes are equal as they are in God; for one infinite cannot exceed another; yet love is represented to us, with particular advantages above the rest. It is God's dear attribute, as I may so speak, and all his other attributes and perfections are the dear goings-forth of this love. I have more to say upon this matter, to show particularly how all the attributes, excellencies, and perfections of God are love in various forms and shapes, but of that hereafter; only before I proceed to the full opening of this, I would conclude by way of anticipation of myself, with two cautions.

1. While we speak of God as love, let us

take heed that we bring no strange fire to this golden altar, that we form not to ourselves an image of any human or angelical loves: but let us raise our spirits upon the wings of the chaste and heavenly dove, to a love within the innermost veil, within the wings of the golden cherubims; to a love pure and agreeable to the purity, the majesty of the divine nature, infinitely transcending the purest, the most glorious flame of the seraphims themselves. They say, there are some mountains in this world so high, and the air that blows upon them is so pure, that a man cannot live there for the purity of it. Sure I am nothing that is unclean can enter into the high and holy place of this love; nothing that defileth can enter into this love; no filthy thing can lie in the spiritual and chaste embraces of this love; nor can this love suffer any such thing to remain in us, and sure I am it will cease to be this love, if it doth not recover us out of all filth into itself. There is nothing so pure as this love in God and in us; therefore the apostle, 1 Tim. i. 5, puts these two together, "Love and a pure heart." Choice plants, we observe, grow and prosper only in their native soil; if they be transplanted into a different ground, they degenerate and come to nothing; assuredly the love of God will live and flourish no where but in a pure heart, in a new and divine nature: if our spirits be impure, unclean, let us use what diligence we can to heighten and cherish the love of God in us, by the richest notions, the sweetest entertainments of it in the most frequent, the most evangelical duties. This divine plant of spiritual love, will in the midst of all these lose its beauty, sweetness, and virtue, and by degrees die away, if the God of love did not revive it.

There is nothing so strict, so exact, so searching, so severe, as this love; nothing can escape this Lover's eye and indignation, that is contrary to it; it finds out every look, every glance, every motion of our spirit that is unchaste to it. Sin and divine love cannot lodge quietly together, cannot divide or share out between them two dominions in one soul; sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace, viz., love; for grace is the highest, the sweetest, the most exalted name of love. Divine love will not suffer any other interest to grow up by it, it will be absolute wherever it comes: so is all love here below, though never so fond, it is still either a sovereign or a tyrant.

There is, I say, nothing so severe, so searching as love: it is compared in scripture to fire; so the baptism of the holy ghost, the spirit of the gospel, the spirit of grace and love, the spirit whose name is love (as the name of the second person in the trinity, is wisdom, or the word) is called a baptism with fire. Divine love wherever it comes is a refiner's fire, separating every where between darkness and light, between good and evil, gold and dross, things that differ; burning up the dross and bringing forth the pure gold to shine more beautifully; transforming every thing into one glorious, heavenly, immortal nature with itself; melting and uniting the

gold until it all run into one undivided mass,

Thus again, the love of the heavenly bridegroom, Cant. viii. 6, is thus described: "Love is strong as death, jealousy is hard, cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are the coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame." It is in the Hebrew, coals of the flame of the Lord, of a divine flame. There are two expressions here which do very emphatically set forth the searching and severe nature of love.

1. Jealousy, which may rather be interpreted the zeal of love, is said here to be as the coals of fire, the coals of a vehement flame, of the flame of *Jah*; it is wherever it comes as the fire of God, a divine fire burning up every thing that is heterogeneous; it is to every thing that is contrary to it, like fire, dreadful, irresistible, devouring, tormenting, till it hath quite consumed the whole body of death, till it hath consumed the whole frame of his creation in us, separating us from every form of things, and transforming us into its own shining and flourishing form. The divine and heavenly person of our Jesus, the primitive and purest love and loveliness.

2. Jealousy (which as I said before may rather be interpreted the zeal of love) is said here to be as strong as death, hard and cruel as the grave. Divine love, the zeal of divine love, both in God and in us, is strong as death, hard and cruel as the grave. The meaning, I conceive, is this: death is hard, inexorable, irresistible; it devours, it feeds upon it, eateth up without any mercy, all things earthly, fleshly, mortal, mixt, until it hath consumed the earthly, the fleshly, the mortal part, and changed all into a pure, heavenly, spiritual, immortal glory, dissolving and resolving all mixtures into the ever blessed and unchangeable unity.

Thus divine love is a divine death, hard as death, cruel as the grave, inexorable, irresistible, never yielding to any thing corrupt, carnal, and earthly; never to be subjected to anything impure, never to be wrought to a compliance with any thing that must die, to cherish that or to lie down in the bosom of it, this is the treachery and adultery of unclean lust, not the truth and purity of heavenly love.

Divine love is like a leaven which over-spreads, subdues, and ferments the whole mass in which it is wrapt up; however that rule, touch not, taste not, handle not, be abolished as to symbolical rites, yet it hath in it an immutable mystery in this love. Divine love can be no more reconciled to sin, than day and night, light and darkness, life and death, can intermingle or comply one with another. To think to live in the love of God and in sin, is to endeavour to reconcile heaven and hell, and to accommodate matters between God and the devil as such. Love is the seed of God, sin is the seed of the serpent, that seed which is the very spirit of hell and of all devils; this which makes hell to be hell, and the devils there to be devils. There is a perpetual enmity between these two seeds; there can be no peace, no not so much as a truce, a cessation of arms between them: one must conquer, kill, and destroy the other. There are not two things in all the world more irreconcilable and inconsistent than divine



love and sin. This love is hard as death, cruel as the grave. O the sweet, the heavenly mystery of divine love, and of death! O the divinity, the divine depth of love and of death! They are both one and the same divine mystery, one and the same way, to one and the same blessed end; death is in truth, the divine love in the form of death. The supremely sweet, the supremely glorious flame of the highest unity, descending in a cloud, drawing all things to itself within that cloud. Thus at once feasting itself upon them, and making itself a feast to them, so feasting together with them; while by its blessed burnings upon them, it converteth them into one flame, one spirit of glory and majesty with itself. This cloud too, in which this supreme unity, this supreme love descendeth, which we call death, is a knot, a chariot of angels, which are indeed a cloud to the natural senses, that is, to the disappearing darkness, but to the spiritual senses, to the springing light, angels, seraphims, angels of love, divine ministers of divine love, shining and singing as they descend and ascend; this is the mystery, the divine mystery of death; this is the mystery of divine love in the form of death; this death is a divine love; thus love is a death to every thing that should die. O how kind is the cruelty of this death! O how faithfully cruel is the kindness of this killing love!

2. My second caution (having so fully vindicated the purity of this love) shall be to take heed how we set any bounds to this infinite love; how we hint that love which is God, that love, that God who is love; a love which hath a depth in it, that swallows up the capacious spirits of men, saints and angels, but can be fathomed by none of them; but only by that spirit which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God.

This incomprehensible love is made up of breadths, and lengths, and depths, and heights, which pass all understanding. Here is a depth without any bottom, a height without any bound, a breadth, a length without any measure. This is a love which stretcheth forth itself beneath, above, through, and beyond all things; a love which at once extends and exceeds all understandings and capacities; a love which hath in it all the fulness of the God-head, an inexhaustible spring, fountain, ocean of love and goodness without beginning or end, without bottom or bound; a love in which, as has been said, where sin hath abounded, grace doth much more superabound. O tell me where is this superabounding grace; and how is this text true, if it leave sin and death reigning and triumphing over the greatest part of mankind? If the evil that abound in the creatures can exceed the love and goodness in God, shall infinite and eternal love fail; shall the sovereignty and wrath of God out-live his love, his grace, his sweetness? Is this wrath greater and stronger than his love? Is it not a servant to it? Do not all his attributes serve his love? Can there be any supreme evil? And can God cease to be God? which he must do when he ceaseth to be good. Let us then take heed we set no bounds to that which is un-

bounded. How we dare to say to this ocean of love, thus far shalt thou go and no further.

## CHAPTER XX.

Shewing that Love is the Universal Perfection of The Deity.

I HAVE already shown that love is the root, the original, the measure, the flower, the sum and substance of all perfections whatever, moral or evangelical, human or divine; that there are no moral perfections we are acquainted with, and have any notion of in ourselves or any where else, but what flow from and are contained in love. I now show that all the perfections of God, all the moral or divine perfections of God are by way of eminence and transcendency comprehended in this love.

There are some perfections in God we best understand, by a participation of and acquaintance with them in ourselves, by a transcript and copy of them in our minds; there are other perfections in God which it is impossible for us to communicate with him, because they are inconsistent with the very notion of a creature, and are peculiar to the Deity, but yet being revealed to us concerning God, we are sure of them because they are conformable to the most perfect ideas we can frame of him; but all still are only so far moral and divine perfections as they spring from, and tend to love. We can conceive of no moral excellencies either in God or in ourselves, but so far as they do partake of and are subservient to this love. I shall give you several instances of the perfections of God to make this good, and I shall begin with those which we would think in their own nature to be most remote from love, no way allied, but contrary to it.

The first instance shall be the *justice* of God. Justice which gives to every one his right and due, this is only so far commendable as it flows from love and communicates with goodness, for otherwise, as we say, *summum jus est summa injuria, too strict justice bears upon cruelty*: it is no perfection to exact, to be too strict and severe, whereas if it were in its own nature and physically good, and not *gratia alterius*, for the sake of something else, it would be universally and so intensely and extensively so; for that which is good in itself, the more there is of it still the better; so that justice which we think in its own nature to be most remote from love, no way allied but contrary to it, yet this justice is only so far a moral perfection, is only so far commendable as it flows from love and communicates with goodness.

There are two sorts of justice, *remunerative* and *vindictive* or punitive justice; of the first, I need say nothing to prove it; it is one with love and goodness, for the thing speaks itself.

*Vindictive* or punitive is either to satisfy a peevish humour which pleases itself in the misery of those by whom it is offended, and there is a spirit of revenge and cruelty in it, equally, absolutely evil and abhorrent from the nature of God and all good men; for how-

soever some men have painted God in their own minds, and represented him to the world as a cruel being, as one extending himself to a larger capacity in severity and wrath, than sweetnesses and loves; as an enemy to, and a neglecter of the joys and felicities of his creatures; as one that waiteth for their haltings, and hath rather a pleasure and delight to himself in the shame and ruin of his own works. This is but a false image, an idol which guilty, angry, peevish man hath set up within itself in the place of God. Or further,

If we consider well the several grounds of vindictive and punitive justice. It is either for the good and correction of the person that is punished, or for the example and preservation of others, or to repair the honour and to secure the right of the party offended; or, for the safety of the community in which, and against which, the crime is committed; or it is to restore and to maintain *the authority of the law*, which is the good, the safety, the welfare of all those that live under it, and which is vilified and weakened by every wilful breach of it to the danger of the whole. Now, the end of the law being the good, the safety, the welfare of all those that live under it, it is plain it must be the end of the punishment also. Now it is plain, that in all these cases, love and goodness is the principle that bestows upon justice whatever it hath of perfection, and that the end of the punishment must be the end of the law; which is the *good of the whole*, or else it is to show that due hatred of, and displeasure against sin, which is in God, and which also ought to be in us; but this is by no means to be accompanied with any ill will to the sinner, but to discountenance and destroy the sin, and so love and goodness is still the root and fruit of it, the bottom and top of it. A right and true hatred of evil every where springs from love of the person; wrath and hatred against sin, is no bitter zeal against the sinner, but a due indignation of love and goodness against the sin. The destruction of sin and propagation of the divine image, is still the principal intention where the indignation is right. The subject suffers only as it is in conjunction with that which is ruinous to itself and one another, and which God and all good men must hate or cease to be themselves. For the proper place which sin hath in the universal harmony of things, is to be the object of a divine hatred. The mark and butt, against which God shoots his burning arrows, and at which he casts his fiery darts.

Or it is for *vindication* of that righteousness, rectitude and purity that is abused and wronged by sin; and so the end of it is either to stir up in the sinner, or to increase in others an high esteem, reverence and love of those perfections; and so goodness is still its rise and fountain, and its stream. Or,

Lastly, it is, as one saith, because sin and punishment are terms which do very well agree one with another, and that sin being the worst thing in the world, it is very meet it should fare accordingly, and this is no more than the natural course of things. That as every principle naturally unfolds itself into all the powers and forms contained in it; so the

evil of sin which is the root of all evil should spring up into all manner of evils, of blame, shame, pain, sorrow, and torment, which all lie wrapt up in it; all this is no more than the sensible *connexion*, the *inviolable order* that must be between the evil of sin, and the evil of suffering, and this is nothing but a branch of that divine wisdom, goodness, impartial and unbiased providence which takes care of the whole.

Thus whether we consider the several kinds and sorts of justice, and the several reasons and grounds of punitive justice, it is most evident that justice, both in God and in us, is nothing else but love and goodness: in another name and dress; is nothing else but the order and harmony of the divine love and goodness. From all the notions of justice before-mentioned, it is impossible to draw an argument for eternal punitive justice; for that can be neither for the correction of the person that is punished, or for the preservation of others, or to repair the honour and to secure the right of the God offended, whose glory is above all; or for the maintaining of the authority of the law, which is the safety and welfare of those that live under it, and which is vilified and weakened by every wilful breach of it. For the law is perfectly fulfilled and abrogated; sure I am, therefore, that every thing, even justice itself, must end where it begins. Justice riseth up from love; is governed by it, and resolves it into itself.

As for vindictive and punitive justice, when it is not for the person before-mentioned, or such like; but to satisfy, as hath been said, a peevish proud humour which pleaseth itself in the misery of those by whom it is offended, it loseth the nature and name of justice, and is of a spirit of *revenge* and *crudelty*, as hath been already said, and in its quality absolutely evil, and abhorrent from the nature of God and good men. Sure I am, for a judge here below, to condemn the greatest malefactor and murderer with pleasure, and delight in the ruin and destruction of his fellow-creature, is to make himself guilty of the same offence, the same murder for which he condemns another to punishment, for punishment sake; for this is the *lust* of the punisher, and cannot be the qualification of any good being. The true notion of justice, the proper scope and design of it is not punishment; but the prevention of those evils which are hurtful to ourselves and others. The vengeance that is taken on wicked men is not the design of justice, but the necessary consequences of it. This is the meaning of all divine laws, of all good laws whatsoever; a security of right and equity. This is the meaning of all the punishment annexed to the breach of those laws to prevent transgression; so that it is the maintenance of that justice and right which governs these matters which is the common good: for justice is a thing, not of a private and personal, but a public and common nature. And is to be preferred before any part whatsoever. God, and no good man punisheth any out of a delight in punishment, or in the sufferings of the punished; but all right punishment is either as physic for the recovery of the patient, or for the good of the whole; as a man consents



to have a member of his own body cut off to preserve the rest, *ne pars sincera trahatur*, so that the source and fountain of all punishment is love and goodness.

It is plain, from all this, that the attribute of justice doth not at all clash with that of goodness, it being indeed but a branch or particular modification of it. That justice is an eternal branch of that perfect love and goodness which is the measure of all things; which is the source, the life, the soul of all morality, virtue and excellency whatsoever: that love and goodness bestows upon justice, whatsoever it hath of a moral perfection and excellency. Suppose now all these cases, for the recovery of the person, the example to others, &c. There is no room for eternal punishment upon these accounts. Take in all the other arguments for the vindicating the honour of God and his law, there is no pretence yet for eternal punishments; because nothing more runs upon the honour of God than such a notion; and if God saves any one in the world with a *salvo* to his justice, his justice is secured if he goes on and saves all.

Another instance is the *holiness* of God. What is it but his loveliness and love? It is called in Scripture the *beauties of holiness*; and it is so called with a peculiar respect to God's mercy, which is one of the sweetest, tenderest, largest, and most condescending names of his love. So in 2 Chron. xx. 21, it is said Jehosaphat appointed singers unto the Lord, that should praise the beauties of holiness, and to say, "Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever." We are too apt to place the beauty of our holiness in a severe and rigid and scornful carriage towards poor sinners; but holiness in God is a spring of all sweetness, tenderness, compassion and bowels towards the worst, the greatest of sinners, to the vilest and most loathsome, and lost. God pronounceth one of his sweetest promises to poor undone sinners, in the greatest pomp and majesty of his holiness, Isaiah lvii. 15: "Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." It is because we are no more holy, that we understand not this; that where there is most holiness there is most meekness, pity, compassion, and condescension to poor sinners. 'Tis a singular expression of God to this purpose; Hosea xi. 9: "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger: I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man, the holy one in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the city." "Such an High Priest," saith the apostle, Heb. vii. 26, "became us, was necessary for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." He was without sin, and the greatest friend to publicans and sinners, and for that very reason, because he was *without sin*. One great reason why we have no more bowels for sinners, why we are so full of bitterness, is, because we have no more true holiness, 1 Tim. ii. 8. The apostle so puts these two together,

"lifting up holy hands without wrath;" as if holiness and wrath were two things that were inconsistent. And again, the Scripture at once calls God the *Holy one of Israel*, and the *Saviour* thereof. Sure I am, true holiness doth not express itself in a sourness of temper and behaviour towards others, but in the greatest sweetness, kindness, and goodwill to them.

We are thus instructed, Gal. vi. 1: "Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." It is a phrase borrowed from chirurgeons, who when they set a broken bone, handle it with all possible tenderness. We are apt to think ourselves more holy than others, when we insult over, and are severe against a poor fallen brother. But where there is most spirituality there is most tenderness too, and the greatest sympathy with fallen ones. And herein we greatly provide for our own standing, as the apostle saith in the following words concerning ourselves, *lest we also be tempted*. It is an observation of mine that God hath *signanter*, signally left persons to *fall themselves*, because they have miscarried in this point. Sure I am, holiness in God is his beauty, his sweetness, his goodness, his love, and therefore this is still brought in as the burthen of all our songs of praise to him, who is glorious in holiness; this is the ground, the reason of all our salvations, and should be the crown, the glory, the end of them all.

Another instance is the *faithfulness* of God; if we do but consider what it is, we must confess it owes its moral perfection to love and goodness. Faithfulness, as hath been already said, is a *conformity* of the declarations of *purposes* and intents, to their issues and *performances*. And is not this accounted a perfection according to the diversity of the subject, about which it is conversant? If a promise be made in absolute terms, and afterwards the performance be suspended on a condition not expressed, we all account it a breach of candor and ingenuity, and complain of it as an abuse and collusion; but if a threatening be pronounced with the same absoluteness that upon the commission of such a fault, such a punishment should certainly follow; yet if upon repentance and submission, or intervening deploration of the offender, or intercession of the Mediator in his behalf, the offender be remitted, do we not applaud it as an act of grace and clemency? So that it is most evident that it is only the partaking or not partaking of goodness that makes these acts undergo divers censures. We should challenge the faithfulness of God and man, when a good promised is not performed; but we complain not of the want of faithfulness, when the evil threatened is not accomplished; we are angry with no man that is not so bad as his word. We do not think it an imperfection, but a perfection of God that he repents him of the evil. Indeed the prophet Jonah in a peevish and malecontent humour, and preferring his own reputation to the honour and glory of God, was displeased and very angry with God, because he did not destroy Nineveh; and yet in the midst of his anger gives this reason why he fled from the command of God, to proclaim the destruction of that great city: "I know," saith he,

"that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth thee of the evil." No person ever yet charged God with unfaithfulness to his word and command, because he did not destroy Nineveh.

We may instance again in the *wisdom* and *power* of God; separate these from love and goodness, and they are, as a great man saith, but subtle, cunning, and crafty mischief, and armed wickedness, and brutish force. Let us imagine a being, saith he, of infinite subtlety and cunning, that can conceive ways and means for carrying on any design; and let this being have all power to bring to pass whatsoever it projects, and let it be, as to its subsistence, immutable and immense, yet if you add to this being principles of envy, malice, and cruelty, it would be so far from deserving the name of God, that it would be a worse devil than hell itself can show; for the prince of devils there, with all his cunning and malice, is subordinate, he can bring nothing to pass without the permission, the commission, and authority of the Supreme Being. Sure I am, there is nothing we should be more careful of, and more afraid to do, than to set up a wisdom, a power, a holiness, a greatness in God, without love and goodness, as its ground, its root, its essence, its design, its fruit, its image, and its end. Give me leave to enlarge a little more upon these two instances, the wisdom and the power of God; and in the first place, to do that right to the wisdom of God as to assert it is all love. The unfathomable depths of the divine wisdom, what are they but the contrivances, the plots, the mysteries, the designs, the methods, the conducts and discipline of his love? as the apostle speaks, Eph. i. that God in the riches of his grace hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence.

The divine wisdom is a manifold and deep channel, which the full spring of eternal love maketh to itself, by the force of which it easily streams through all things in various courses and forms, until they meet again in the sea of love, in the bosom of God. Divine wisdom is the riches of divine love, spreading itself into an infinite variety, through innumerable changes and windings, and brings forth itself all along, and fully in the close into a most ravishing harmony of all divine beauties and joys. Divine wisdom is love itself, forming itself into rich designs, most beautiful contrivances, full of unexpected and surprising turns, full of depths, past the searches of every created eye, that in the close it may display its blessed treasures more fully, and that it may sooner or later raise and enlarge every spirit to take in its joys. Thus, as was said before, the riches of grace hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and in all prudence.

The divine wisdom in all its works within and without, is no other than a deep, delightful, God-like conveyance of love, on which the whole God-head lays itself out, to the utmost of all its bounded fulness and treasures, for this love to bring forth and express itself with all possible advantage, with all beautifyings, sweetenings, and heightenings; as in the whole contrivance, so in each part and point of it, through all which this love by this

wisdom conducted itself with an unexpressible force and sweetness.

The wisdom of God is, as an excellent person calls it, the divine art of love, the divine prudence; and prudence is the net of this love to catch hearts in, spread through the sea of this creation. O how blessed are they that are caught in this net, by this *fisher of souls*, the divine love and wisdom!

The wisdom of God, which is a pure act of highest and most universal harmony, is the *music* of divine love, by which it charmeth souls, and attracts them to itself. Who would not submit to all the methods of this wisdom, which is love, though he doth not comprehend its ways? I would further say from the *power* of God; his *power*, *omnipotency*, with his liberty to do whatever he pleaseth, is nothing else but the *strength of his love*; the almightiness of his goodness, which being stronger than evil, can never be overcome nor interrupted by it; but powerfully reaches all things, and sweetly, first or last, subdues them to himself, irresistibly imparting itself to them, according to those several degrees in which they are capable of it. God is an infinite, a perfect *power*, *hyle dunamis*, as one calls him, a whole *entire power*; such hath no allay, no mixture of impotency, nor any defect of power mingled with it; but still the *moral* perfection of his power, is his *love and goodness*. God cannot with all his power do any thing that is evil; his power is still guided, governed and exerted by his will; "he worketh all things after the council of his own will;" and his will is *love* itself, goodness itself, the first, the supreme, the essential goodness, the unsearchable treasure of all sweetnesses and joys. His power and his goodness then are inseparable, are one in all; in those mighty acts in which he displays the one, he also discovers the other. All the acts of his power are indeed but so many various expressions of his love and goodness. It is not power to be able to do one's self a mischief; the *root* of all power is goodness; the *terms* of all power are the same goodness. All true power begins and ends in goodness; power without goodness is a monster. He doth a child no unkindness who takes from it a knife or any thing mischievous to it. He doth a madman no injury, that holds his hands and binds him, and so hinders him from wronging himself. It is no expression of health and strength, but the height of a distemper and weakness, for a man to overpower all that are about him, and to offer violence to himself and them. 'Tis a rule, *posse malum est non posse, power to evil is inability*; it is not properly power, but impotency. Power and liberty to sin is a contradiction in the very terms; it is as if one should say *power to weakness*, power to nothing, or to that which is worse than nothing, or *liberty to slavery*; for goodness is essential and intrinsic to power and liberty. All power and liberty is comprehended in the nature of good alone; for what is power and liberty, but an exaltation and enlargement of being. And being and goodness are but one: and therefore there is nothing so inconsistent with true power, liberty, and freedom, as evil; which is in its very formality a deficiency, a fault, a nothing,



a privation of being. Whatsoever we promise to ourselves to find in ways of sin, there is nothing but impotency, weakness, narrowness, straitness, confinement, and slavery in all sin. There is only true power, liberty and enlargement, and satisfaction in good. We may think sin an act of power and freedom; but it is indeed weakness, servitude, bondage, and slavery; for God who is the mightiest, the truest agent, cannot sin. We may think it an act of strength, courage, resolution, valour and bravery; but it is the greatest piece of impotency, weakness, cowardice, and baseness in the world; for God who is omnipotent cannot do it. It is like the paralytic motion, it pretends to nimbleness and agility, but it is only want of strength. The head shakes as if it were troubled with over many spirits, but we know it proceeds from weakness, and a loosening of the powers of nature; such a weak, crazy, sickly thing is sin. Whatsoever this deluded world fancies towards evil, it is *impotent*; for man's greatest power and perfection, before the fall, was, that he did not know evil; he was biased and inclined to good, and his experience of evil, which we fondly call his liberty to evil, is now his weakness, slavery, and misery.

There are many positive attributes of God, which are his honour, as to be omniscient, omnipotent, eternal and the like; and so the negation of power in God to do amiss, is his perfection too; this is God's honour, that he cannot sin, he cannot lie, he cannot do any wrong; he that hath all power, and can do all things, cannot do amiss; he that can do what he will, cannot will what he should not do. All evil is a deficiency, a tendency to annihilation, and power cannot produce weakness. The act of omnipotency cannot terminate to nothing; this is God's perfection, God's liberty, that he is a being absolutely and necessarily good; his power, his freedom, and perfection, consists in being able to will only that which is good, just and holy, and in having absolute power to do what he will. Men and angels, in their first creation, had an image of his power, freedom, and blessedness; and this did consist in a power of willing only such things as were good and pleasing to God, and in a power of entertaining all those inferior motions, according to the rectitude of this divine will and image; but this power, in respect of willing what they should, and doing what they would, was mutable, and in that it was, so this power and liberty fell short.

If we go on further, and take a view of the almighty power of God throughout, we shall find it still to be love and goodness. Let us view his almighty power in the works of creation; we see that it was an ocean of love and goodness which delights to overflow its banks, to diffuse and communicate itself, that moved him to bring the world into being, and to make so many subjects capable of itself; for it was impossible for him to reap any benefit from any, or all his creatures, men and angels, because nothing can be added to his perfection, *amor divinus rerum omnium est principium*, as a great philosopher speaks; it was then to communicate his goodness, and by that communication to take up his creation

into a participation of his own happiness, that he made the whole world.

Take a view again of his almighty power in the works of preservation and providence, which are continued acts of creation, and you will find all here to be a constant emanation of the same love and goodness, to be from the beginning to the end, an emanation of that love and goodness; which is but a natural and genuine notion of God, that he should exert the same goodness to beings which that goodness produced. Although as a great man saith, it seems becoming the simplicity and majesty of God, that he should be alone with himself, retired into the not approachable recesses of his own being, yet through the infinite desire of communicating and diffusing his own love and goodness, he, as it were, lays aside state, and goes forth of himself, and by his tender care and providence, is intimately present with the lowest projection of being. The same love and goodness is that tender mother that brought forth and bears up all things, that holds and enfolds the whole creation continually in the tender bosom of its loving embraces. Thus it is said, he fills all in all, and comprehends all in himself. If you view his whole providence with an unveiled eye, you will find it all a rich contexture of the tenderest love; eternal love to be as the soul of it, the spring, the life, the beauty, the sweetness residing in the whole work of providence, and resting entirely on each motion of it. Take a view of all his power in the work of redemption, which a great man calls *ultimus divini amoris conatus, the last effort of God's love*; and here you have throughout the exceeding greatness of his power in the highest expression of his love and goodness. Thus the gospel, which is a discovery and communication of the highest grace and goodness, is called the *power of God to salvation*.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Shewing that the Will of God is Love.

THIS is an universal truth, that in every spirit love and will are one. This appears, saith an excellent person, in their nature, their object, and their operation. 1. The nature of the *will* and *love* are one: The *will* is declined to be the inclination of the intellectual spirit, *an it tendeth and bendeth itself to this or that*, this way or that way, love is styled the *weight of the soul*; as heavy things by their weight, so souls by their love, are carried to their proper centre.

2. The object of the will and love is the same. It is a rule, that the power and habits on spirits are divided by their objects. Every principle and faculty is the object in its seed; the object is the form and perfection of the principle; the object of the will is *goodness* real or appearing. The will is never moved but by some reality or appearance of good. And what is the object of love but loveliness? Now loveliness and goodness both consist in *suitableness*, which hath its ground in unity. If there be any difference between goodness

and loveliness, it is this: that as the flower of light is the sunshine, and as *Jesus Christ* is the effulgency, the shine of the God-head, the brightness of the glory of God; so loveliness or beauty is goodness *shining out* to attract all hearts to it. Thus *loveliness*, the object of *love* and *goodness*, real or appearing, the object of the will, agree entirely in one.

3. All the *operations* of the will and love are the same. The affections and passions are the motions of the will; all these are loves, summer and winter. Love in the seed is desire, love in the ripe fruit is joy; for grief and hatred are love in its opposition to its *enemy*, which is *enmity* alone—love flowing from or contending with that which stands in its way to, or would rob it of its beloved object. This, saith he, is the general notion concerning the will and love, and he goes on and shows, in particular, how the divine will and love must more transcendently appear to be the same.

The will of God, saith he, is divided by *divines* into the *revealed* and *secret* will of God. The one is the divine will in outward signs only, the other is the good pleasure in his heart and in eternity. He goes on, and proves the revealed will of God to be love, with that scripture which was my first text to prove my hypothesis. \* 1 Tim. ii. 5. And that the secret will of God is love too, he proves from those words: "Fury (saith God) is not in me: But who would set the briars and thorns in battle array against me, I will go through them, I would consume them." Wrath, saith he, is not properly in God, it is *without him*; it is only as a cloud upon the sun. The heart of God is love; wrath is but as the work of his hands, and that is his *strange work*, like nothing within, a disguise only. The face of God, and the proper light of it is love; wrath is a vizard, a mist before his face, and no more. God's fury is love, by the opposition heightened to a flame, to consume all vanity and enmity, that settleth itself before it or against it. Thus he excellently writes in his † *rise, reign* and *royalty* of the kingdom of God in the soul of man. And I repeat his own words, because I cannot mend them, and because every one hath not the book, and because I delight upon all occasions to make him yet speak though he be dead. And he concludes, "O that I had a voice powerful enough to reach all the souls wandering through this whole creation, and to call them together to take this cup of salvation into the hand of their faith, to set it to the mouth of their faith and drink deeply of it! as the wine of this cup goes down into their spirits, they will find it to go down right. How sweetly, and how fully will it touch, satisfy, and fill every faculty, every desire, every seed of life with its proper food. The cup of salvation (saith he) which I hold forth to all, is this divine truth, the sum of the gospel preached by angels in their song, at the birth of our *Jesus*: *The will of God is love.*

"Hear this (saith he) and believe it, O ye souls! the inclination of God, the supreme

spirit, and fountain of spirits is to you; the tendency and bent of the divine nature, is to make your joys full by the possession of all good in itself, and to fulfil his own joys in you. For the will is the inclination of every spirit, and the will of God is love. The will of God, in the freedom, absoluteness, infiniteness of it is love.

"Now I live, saith St. Paul, if ye stand fast in the faith, 1 Thess. iii. 8. (he further observes.) St. Paul speaks not this in his own spirit, but in the spirit of God. God in his own spirit then speaketh it with greater force and fuller sense to every one of you. If you believe me, and take in my love, which is my life. Now I have a new love, a new life, a new joy, and Heaven in you. If you stand fast in it, my joy and glory is as firm in your hearts as in heaven itself.

"If we will believe (he concludes) all the declarations of God from heaven: the revealed will of God is love. If we have any inward and divine touch of the secret will of God, all the breathings of his heart are love. O then, saith he, let us take in the love of God, that his love may become a divine immortal seed of all love and loveliness in us."

It is true the will of God is an *absolute sovereignty*, without any control or confinement; his wisdom is unalterable, his power is unlimited and unbounded; and in all his perfections he is an arbitrary being. But arbitrary government is due to his wisdom, because nothing can mend it, to his power; because it is the power of his love and goodness; and to his will, because as hath been said, it is love; and it is our interest, and the interest of all things to allow this sovereignty, because it is ever attended with an eternal goodness to measure and regulate it; and because it can do nothing but that which is good, and whatever is best in its proper season.

And so I come to show the *sovereignty* and dominion of God over all things, hath its foundation, virtue, perfection, and pre-eminence, in his love and goodness. It is founded in the infinite excellencies of his nature, and on this account he claims it, Isa. xli. 9, 10: "I am God, and there is none like me, I will do all my pleasure."

The whole exercise of this sovereignty and dominion is as the right, so the *discovery* of his infinite love and goodness. Although it is an absolute sovereignty and dominion, yet there is nothing of tyranny in it; for it is throughout managed by the rule of wisdom, righteousness, love, and goodness; his sweetness is a sweetness of grace, love; and that grace is the highest, sweetest, and most exalted name of love, as hath been said.

If we take a view of his sovereignty and dominion in the nature, tendency and the design of all the laws he hath given us in the excellency and perfection of them, we shall find that he is not here mere arbitrary will, such will as hath no reason besides itself; but that his will itself is the highest law of all wisdom and goodness, all equity and fitness. It is as one saith, the *το δειν* itself decreeing, willing and acting.

All his *moral* laws flow from his own nature, and are absolutely good; for what hath

\* Misquoted, I suppose, for 1 John iv. 16.

† Written by Peter Sterry.



he commanded us here, but that we should give ourselves to him, to whom, and upon whom we live; still to acknowledge him by whose power we were, and at whose pleasure we are; and always to depend upon him, which is the very law, state, and necessity of our being, and therefore ought to be our choice. To believe the God of truth, to fear the God of power and justice, to love the highest love and loveliness in the highest degree, to enter into and centre our souls upon the most unalterable good, to take up our ultimate satisfaction in Him who is the beginning, the way, the end of all things, to give all glory, and to attribute all good to our Creator, to resign ourselves and to seek our rest alone in him, and to be still returning into him, into his bosom, who is our original glory; to obey in all things his revealed will, which is the copy of the will, which is in himself, and which is himself, and which is the rule and measure of all goodness, rectitude and perfection, to converse with him as the parent of our beings, as the father of our spirits, in a free and cheerful manner, as one in whom we live, move and have our being; perpetually encompassed by him, and never moving out of him; to resign all our ways and lives up to him, with an equal and indifferent mind, as knowing that he guides and governs all things in the best manner, according to the highest rule of goodness, and that our part and portion is to behold and admire the excellent harmony of all his works, to sink ourselves as low in humility before him as we are in self-nothingness; to express a Godlike spirit and life in this world, throughout all our converses with it, taking from him the continual pattern of our lives, and being throughout, a resembling of him in all our dealings with others; to do good, show mercy and compassion, administering justice and righteousness in the world, being always full of charity and good works, looking upon ourselves as having nothing to do in this world but to display the glory of our original, and to frame our minds, our lives, and all our actions according to our first pattern, always to do that to others which is just and right in itself, and according to the measure we would have them do with us. These and several other things of this nature, respecting God, ourselves, and our neighbors, which are the branches of that moral righteousness God requires from us, they are all immutable, unalterable, true, just, and necessary, if we were under no obligation from his absolute command.

In a word, he hath in these things commanded us only to be our *true selves*, for all this is no more than the nature, measure and weight of the true man, as *Plotinus* calls him; yea in all this, he hath only commanded us to be happy, and it is our greatest offence against him not to be so. We are under a natural obligation to all these things; there is no need of the formality of a law in these cases; for these things are all published and proclaimed in our very beings; a man must cease to be what God made him, before he can think himself exempted here, or desire to be so. We are in these things engaged at once to do our duty, and to mind our happiness; we must wrong

ourselves as well as offend God and our neighbours in every act of disobedience here. Yea, therefore, we offend him here, because we wrong ourselves and our neighbours; for he is not at all hurt by our doing this, and we cannot strike at his authority in these laws, but we must stab ourselves, and endeavour as far as in us lies to kill all our fellow-creatures; so foolish, so furious, so implacable a thing is every breach of this moral law of God.

And so also for his positive laws; they are all relatively good; as our Saviour speaks of the sabbath, made for the good of man, and do all give place when they jostle with any other law of moral duty, or human necessity. God gave these laws, not so much to manifest his absolute dominion and sovereignty as some think, but for the good of those that were enjoined to obey them, and as an expression throughout of the divine care and goodness, as well as power and authority; and this belief *Moses* endeavours almost throughout the book of *Deuteronomy* to strengthen the *Israelites* in. Yea, his very ceremonial laws, they were all types, figures, shadows, of the good things that were to come: there is in short the highest good, *philanthropy*, equality, fitness, and charity, running through all his laws.

If again we take a view of his sovereignty and dominion, as he reigneth over, ruleth and rideth upon all form of things, and doth whatsoever he pleaseth in heaven and in earth, we shall find it to be all a sovereign love and goodness.

He from whom all laws take their rise and emanation, is not himself, as one saith, without law, nor in a sober sense above it, for the primitive rule of his economy in this world, are not the only and sole results of an absolute will, but the sacred decrees of the highest reason, wisdom, and goodness; and therefore those grandees who call themselves God's vicegerents in this world, have as much mistaken the true notion of him they pretend to represent, as they have forgotten the interest of the people whose trustees they are, when they have assumed a power to themselves, and sovereignty above law. The prerogative of God himself is nothing else but an absoluteness, a sovereignty, a transcendency of goodness, strongly taking hold of all things at pleasure, and irresistibly imparting itself to them. That prerogative which is essential to God, which is originally in him, who hath no dependency upon his creatures, and can derive nothing from them, it is still exerted for their good, and is a sovereignty of goodness. It is not, was never yet, nor will be laid out against, but for his creatures in the rescue, service; defence, and recovery of them; and therefore all claim to any such thing on earth, must be of the same nature, a sovereignty, a transcendency of power for the good and *welfare* of the *whole*, not the *will* and pleasure of any *particular*; and this is plain, whether such prerogative be derived from God or from the people; for if it be from God, it ought to be like God, having him for its original and pattern—and if it be from the people, it ought certainly to be for them, and not against them, and to be interpreted as their letter or attorney, a power not given for their hurt but advantage; for

every thing throughout nature ends where it begins.

And that no man may pretend the public welfare, and cover his private and corrupt interest with such pretences against the general sense and interest of the whole, it is necessary that all prerogative and claim to power here below, should be directed and bounded by law; for as a philosopher saith, *the law ought to govern all*, or else you make a gap in the hedge of government for all manner of confusion and looseness to break in; and this is a principle and law in Christianity, that we should *provide things honest in the sight of all*, Rom. xii. 17. Things honest, or beautiful, or comely, as the word signifies, in the sight of all men. And no man is in his administration of human affairs, to justify himself from within only, but from those other laws he is under without him, at least from the true reason and *spirit* of them; for there I make a just exception. Our Saviour was the best Jew that ever lived, and did most perfectly fulfil the Jewish law, and yet as those doctors thought, did break the *letter* of it, when he, most of all, fulfilled the *spirit* of that law. This is most certain, that all power, prerogative, and privilege is to be understood and exerted for preservation and not to mischief; thus is it in the Divine Being, and much more must be in all limited beings.

It is true, God, and he only, is an absolute sovereign, without any limitation, constraint, or confinement; his will is a law to himself, and unto all things else. Arbitrary government is his right, his due: but we must not for all this think he is nothing (at least) but mere arbitrary will in our senses. He is not made up of will, an authority and power, without any essential goodness and justice to measure and regulate them. I readily grant the will of God is undetermined by any thing but itself, but yet it is not a will absolutely indifferent to all things; for it can will nothing but that which is good. And although this will be the very rule or measure of God's justice and wisdom itself; yet it is also true, that this will is ever determined by a rule or reason of good. The truth is at once, it makes all things good by willing them, and wills them because they are good; it is at once arbitrary, and in its arbitrariness most highly reasonable and desirable. God is arbitrary will and power, not in our corrupt sense and practice, but in a divine notion and sense; arbitrary will and power in our sense and practice, is nothing else but weakness and impotency, a brutish fury and madness, mere humour, an irrational appetite, and so far from upholding, that it destroys all government, not only the true blessings of it, but the very right notion of it. But God is so in a divine sense; his arbitrariness and absoluteness wisely and justly disposing itself, and omnipotency reaching all things, an irresistible goodness, justice and wisdom, or as one saith, decorousness, fitness, and as was said before, *of itself*, still willing and acting it, so, as that which is absolutely the best, is an indispensable law to it, because it is his very essence. Not that he is bound or obliged to do the best, in our poor servile sense of these words here below, or by any command or law

from another as superior; this would destroy his liberty, and indeed his being; this would be a contradiction to the perfections of his own nature, from which he cannot possibly deviate, no more than ungod himself; and did we rightly understand this matter, we should no more dispute about our own poor, broken, low, and divided notions of it, but happily be delivered from all the unnecessary disputes on both sides about it.

And now as an excellent person saith very well, what understanding or will of man or an angel, must not with an unexpressible pleasure resign themselves and all to this absolute sovereign, divine will, when this will appears to us nothing arbitrary, but in goodness itself, its own object rule and perfection; a goodness which is eternally, unalterably and immovably the supreme and universal goodness, containing in itself all kinds and degrees of goodness at an equal height with itself; a goodness to which every understanding and will by its own principle and most essential activity and motion is carried up with a necessity and irresistibility, most rationally and most voluntarily, that is, most divinely, harmonious and agreeable. What spirit, endowed with an understanding and a will, can forbear from casting itself with sweetest transports into the arms and absolute conduct of this most absolute and arbitrary good, *viz.* of a most absolute and arbitrary goodness? Think once of God as wisdom, goodness, sweetness, justice, love itself, all pure, unmixt, unconfined in their most absolute essences; in their highest exaltation, in their greatest amplitude, in their most potent vigour; and when you have these thoughts, tell me, if all things within you do not with the fullest concurrence meet in this one only most passionate desire, that this God, this *best mind*, as the Stoics speak, may alone conduct you, and the whole course of all things. Tell me, reader, if it be not thy interest, and the interest of all things, that this God should be absolute, arbitrary, and uncontrollable, and under no law, but from himself, and what himself is to himself? We read in a story of a barbarian ambassador, who came on purpose to the Romans of old, to negotiate for leave to become their servants. Sure I am, it cannot be more the duty than it must be the wisdom, the policy, the interest of every mind to be still in obedience and subjection to God, under the government and conduct of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness. This is indeed the safety and security of all creatures, that God should be *absolute*, arbitrary, and uncontrollable. Who can desire his wisdom should be altered when nothing can amend it, his power should not be unlimited and unbounded when all other power would be ruinous, if not subordinate to his power?

## CHAPTER XXII.

Shewing that the very Anger of God is kindled and acted by his Love, a most pure and perfect Love, and subservient to it, and therefore cannot finally overpower it, and subdue it into subordination to itself.

To make this plain, I would give a more



general, and then a more particular explication of this anger.

That I would say in the general explanation of this anger is this.

Anger is attributed to God by a two-fold figure; the first is called an *anthropopathy*, when passions proper to men are applied to God, while by the suiting of the language to the capacities of the hearers, God is represented to us in the form and in the fashion of a man. The other figure is a *metonymy*, where the cause is set for the effect, and the thing signified in the place of the sign.

It is a metonymical way of speaking, which expresseth the effect by the cause; so the scriptures speaking with the *tongue of man* (as the Jews express it) representing those effects of the divine providence, by the names of the anger and the wrath of God, which answer to those effects that commonly proceed from anger and wrath in men.

Thus by this two-fold figure, those changeable passions in created spirits, which bring forth, and express themselves by changes of good or evil, the effects and signs of those passions are applied to the unchangeable God, when he brings forth the like passions in his works: the Holy Scripture speaking here with the tongue, and in the language of a man.

But all such figurative expressions concerning God, are to be understood with this caution and rule, every thing indeed in the creature is a figure, which hath its original pattern answering to it in the divine nature; but all imperfections attending the creature are to be removed, all perfection in the uttermost heights and most absolute fullness, are to be attributed to the original pattern, when by the shadowy figure in the creature, you look to the exemplary and primitive *truth* in God; and so by those changeable and divers passions in man, you are to represent to yourselves in God, a goodness, a power, an unsearchable richness of variety, and manifestly various wisdom, and all these apart and together, with the most absolute simplicity and highest unity in the Divine essence, producing all diversity of accidents, all changes of good and evil in the design, which cometh forth at once as one piece divinely rich in all variety from him, and as one entire image filled with the riches of all distinct beauties of him, who is unchangeable, who is unchangeably, and so most perfectly one. This is my general account of anger in God. Divine anger in God, is called by the aforesaid figures, which expresses things in God after the manner of men.

I would now bring this matter down to every understanding by a more particular explication of this anger. To lift up then the veil, and to discover the divine mysteries beneath this figure, the divine secret and hidden glory in the divine anger. Anger in God shews itself, and its innocency in these particulars:

1. There is in God a *contrariety* to every thing that is evil; as light and darkness, so is the divine nature and sin contrary to one another. The divine love and beauty in their own nature, are essentially and eternally contrary to sin, whose nature altogether subsists in deformity and enmity. Now the very principle and essence of anger lies in this contra-

riety; so far as it is innocent and divine. God is eternally the same; when you present those things which are suitable to him, that are holy, he is said to be well pleased; because there is a suitableness between him and that which is presented to him. When you set darkness, evil, and sin before God; now he is said to be angry, because there is a contrariety between that excellency, which is God, and sin.

2. The second particular in anger is this, a *clouding of his countenance*; then we say a father, a friend is angry with us, when he will no more speak kindly to us as formerly he did. When his countenance is shut towards us, then we say, God is angry with man; when he withdraws the discoveries of himself from man, when the joys that flow from him are ebbing, and return back upon himself again, when he hides the light of his countenance from us.

3. The third particular of anger in God, carries this along with it, that it is a *rising of spirit seeking the destruction of that which stands in the way of its content*. It is anger in God when his spirit is moved and breaks forth within him, to destroy every thing that offends, together with the principles of it; his spirit riseth to destroy not only sin, but the sinning principle, the natural man, the flesh; when our God thus comes forth as a consuming fire upon us, and when he answers by terrible things in righteousness, he is then our God, and the *God of our salvation*.

Moralists observe, that the object of anger is that which stands in the way of one's contentment, and that the workings of anger are passages to one's content, by the destruction of that impediment. We say well according to man, that God is angry, when he riseth to destroy and burn up all the fuel of sin, that he may make way to the setting up of his glory every where. Thus God expresseth his own glory, Isa. xxvii. 4: "Fury is not in me, but if you set the briars and thorns against me in battle, I would go through them, I would burn them together; if ye put the stubble in the way, I will pass through it and consume it." These are the particulars of anger in God.

The divine love and beauty in their own nature are, as hath been said, essentially and eternally contrary to sin, whose nature altogether subsists in deformity and enmity. The very entrance of sin, as a great man observes, is designed to this end, that the supreme love may declare its supreme purity, in all its lovelinesses and sweetnesses by the powers, the heights, the irreconcilableness of its opposition in all forms of contrariety to the enmity and deformity of sin, that it may manifest its sovereign power and sweetness in subduing sin to itself, in turning its evil to a greater good, a more glorious and eternal good, that by its contrariety to sin it may render itself more amiable, and by its conquest over sin, more admirable in all eyes and hearts.

I shall conclude this general and particular explanation of anger in God, with these two universally and necessarily agreed notes.

1. The movement of this anger is a *divine excellency* in God; it damps not his love; he can no more cease to be love when he is angry, than he can cease to be God.

When God is angry, he enjoys himself as sweetly now as ever he did before. His own love, and his own loveliness, and the delights that flow from them are nothing at all troubled, and therefore he saith, "fury is not in me." Fury is not a thing that dwells among his contents; when he is most angry, then is he in the same joy and glory as he was in before; for his anger moves as in a sphere without. All in him is love, and even that in him, on which the out-going wrath is bottomed and founded, is still love, pure love, or a variation of the movements of love.

Again, the anger of God damps not the sweetness and love of God towards any of his *saints*. He is as much in love with them when he is angry with them, as when he was smiling upon them; nay, the anger of God towards his own is the fruit of his love, and a strong expression of it; as a heathen could say, those whom God afflicts, *fortiter illos amat*, he loves them strongly; his anger hath love still for its spring and for its end.

God hath, as I may so speak, a double content, the enjoyment of himself, and the enjoyment of his saints in himself. When he is angry, it is so far from weakening this content, that anger from God ever flows from his love, and from that desire and delight that he hath to make his own joy, and the joy of his saints mutual, in the full enjoyment one of another.

Nor doth this anger alter or change the bowels, the tendernesses which, as he is the father of all, he hath to all his offspring. Job ix. 22, we read, "he destroys the perfect and the wicked." If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent: when the scourge falleth alike upon the innocent and the wicked, God laugheth at it. When wicked men suffer for their sins, when innocent persons are refined by their sufferings, the eye of God is fixed upon his own divine loveliness and glory alike in both. The purest and most perfect love acteth here toward this most pure and perfect loveliness and glory in both; for the meeting and blissful embraces of these two, this love and loveliness in the divine nature, his joy and complacency is alike in both equally, fully at the height. As heat and cold which continually fight in the elements below, are in the heavenly bodies; but after so eminent a manner, that they meet and enfold each other with a most harmonious agreeableness. Thus anger and love, as all forms of things more discordant in the creatures, are first in the divine nature; but they are there with an eminence, with a transcendancy in which they are refined, harmonized, and heightened far above all imperfection: here they all meet as a most grateful, and most agreeable variety in the entire and undivided unity of the same eternal love, of the same eternal God. As from this height of a most perfect unity, these divine varieties bring forth various effects in a shadowy resemblance here below, they make

the figures of the whole divinely one, and divinely beautiful; and as divine seals, they press the figure of their own divine unity on each single effect.

My second note is this, the movement of this anger in God is a *divine wisdom*. Anger in God doth not darken and disturb his wisdom. It is not with God as it is with man. Let man have made it the design of many years to make a friend happy; yet if a variance afterwards happens, now the counsels and designs of this man, instead of making him happy, are upon crossing him, when the intent of his mind at first, was to raise and make him happy. When God is angry, he is one even in that anger. The countenances of God are as great and as full, make that saint or person with whom he is angry, blessed and glorious as ever it was before. Anger is so far from disturbing the wisdom of God, that it is the instrument of that wisdom; and God is never angry but upon a design to make his saints and his church more blessed and glorious by his anger. And so may we say of his wisdom with respect to all his other works, over and above whom his mercy extends. God never loseth nor gives over his grand design of love in his anger, which he hath locked up in his own breast from his whole creation. A picture, as one speaks, consists of crooked lines as well as strait, and of shades as well as of lights and glories. Divine love, which "abounds towards us in all wisdom and in all prudence," as the apostle speaks, Eph. i.; divine love, which infinitely transcends all the skill, the art, the wit, the contrivance of all men, knows how to make every thing beautiful in its season and place, and every particular in his whole design, to add sweetness and lustre to the whole piece. Whether he lays dark or bright colours; whether he makes shades or lights, crooked lines or straight, or circular, he is still actuated by that idea of beauty and love, which he hath in his own mind; he is still forming the same lovely face, carrying on the same design in every stroke and colour. Sometimes, as the person before cited speaks, he makes a land of Egypt, sometimes a passage out of it; here a Red Sea, there a way through it; now a wilderness, then a land of Canaan. But still in all, he keeps his eye upon the same divine design of love and glory, and is still forming this image of love and glory in every Egypt, Red Sea, wilderness, and Canaan. He is still unchangeable and the same, though in a varied form, but ever equally himself, equally living, equally beautiful, never fading, never passing away. According to this account of anger and wrath in God, I cannot, without affronting God and forfeiting my own understanding, conceive how anger and wrath can at last, and finally prevail in the breast of that sweetness and wisdom, who hath told us, that "anger resteth in the bosom of fools;" and hath commanded us "not to let the sun go down upon our wrath."

Anger and wrath in us, is indeed a fond, foolish, rash, hair-brained thing, *est bravus ira furor*, a short distraction, a frenzy; and our love is as fond, as blind, as giddy as our



anger, but there is no such thing as rashness or fondness in God. He is neither transported beyond bounds in his displeasure, nor in his love. He doth not correct us for his pleasure but for our profit, to make us "partakers of his own holiness," Heb. xii. 10; and on the other hand, if there be need, we shall be sure to be in heaviness for a season, as Peter tells us, 1 Pet. i. 6. Anger in God is but a particular exorbitant movement of his justice, which is the purity, the wisdom, the order, the law of the divine nature, opposing the discord, the deformity, the enmity of sin. Anger in God is but the even and equal *balance* of his goodness, the faithfulness and exactness of his love. It is his love to us which kindles his anger against us, which puts him into an indignation against sin, which separates between us and him, that he and we might be brought together. This anger of his burns until it hath consumed all its own proper objects; and so by losing them comes to lose itself, and to be swallowed up into the love which first sent it forth. Thus anger in God hath love for its root and for its fruit; it is indeed all but love disguised, love hiding itself in order to a more glorious discovery. It is all but love, consuming, burning up all that which stands in its way, and hinders it from shining out in its full glory, that so it may obtain a more perfect victory and triumph.

I will shut up this particular head, with a few words to saints and to sinners, and to both mixed, for so they are in this state.

1. Let us learn from hence, how good and sweet a God the saints have, and how blessed a portion is their God. They have indeed a God that can be angry with them when they sin against him, but so that his anger itself is love, is a design to make them more glorious and blessed. What should we fear but the anger of our God? But even here we have cause to be comforted; for it is an unchangeable love he works by, even in his anger; yea, his very anger itself flows from that love, and is the faithful pursuit of it. If God smile upon you, happy are you. But you are happy too though he be angry with you and frown upon you: "He forgets not his covenant in his anger," *Psa. lxxxix.* What can make us miserable but the anger of God? And yet in this he carries on our blessedness as entirely as when he doth in smiling. This is the happiness of a saint, that the dreadfullest of all things, the anger of God itself, hath still a mystery in it of power, sweetness and wisdom, carrying on this blessedness.

2. Let us learn from hence, to observe and govern our anger by these two characters, which have been given of the anger in God, so shall our anger be not carnal but divine.

1st. Let there be a predominant principle of sweetness and love in our anger. We are allowed a zeal for God; but not a *bitter zeal*; not a zeal that springs from a root of bitterness within; so as James speaks of that zeal, condemns it immediately to that fountain, which as it blesseth God, so it curses man. Doth thy anger come from a spirit of holiness, from a spirit of blessing? Canst thou say when thou art most angry with man in any

case, that yet thou lovest him, and it is thy love to him makes thee angry with him, and in the secret of thy spirit thou couldst joy to receive him into the fellowship of the glory of God with thyself? Now thy anger is indeed divine, if thou canst enjoy a sweetness within when thou art outwardly angry, when thy anger is only the faithfulness of thy love, hath love for its root, design, aim, and end, like the anger, as hath been said, of God, only *love disguised*.

2d. What is the aim of thy anger? Doth thy anger raise a storm in thy breast, where all things are in a tumultuous tempest and disorder in thy apprehension and in thy affection; and doth the bitter zeal of thy anger interrupt thy due pursuit of the general interest of God and of thy country? This renders thy anger suspicious. Is thy anger to revenge thyself upon the person with whom thou art angry? Or is it to make way for the glory of God to break forth to destroy that which is contrary to the Spirit of God in that person? He that is divinely angry distinguishes always between the glory of God, and a compliance with his own humour. He distinguishes carefully the object of his anger, between the person of man and the principle of sin in the man; his anger tends not to the hurt of the person at all. This would be hatred, which is no where allowed; but his anger is altogether to the destruction of sin in the man, and to the saving of the sinner, that the flesh may be destroyed. And he distinguishes as carefully between the glory of God, and a compliance with his own humour. He sits down in the calmness of his own spirit, and there, between God and himself he witnesses, it is not to give way to his humour, or his opinion which is crossed, or to make way for that his opinion, but only for the enlargement of the glory of God, and for a clear passage of the gospel, for which his anger works. Take this for a rule, that when our *own persons* are the cause of our anger, that self is the cause of that anger. All the devil's rage is the love of himself, as he is in himself and not in God; and the object of the devil's rage is against the person of man; it is not the taking away of his estate, or liberty, but it is the destruction of his person; and if he can but destroy that, he will heap upon him all the contents of the world to bring this to pass. Let your anger then, if you would be angry as God is, every where distinguish between the good and the evil. Let the remaining mixture in yourselves instruct you how to carry it towards one another in all this mixture. Love the good; be angry with the evil; advance the good, oppose the evil. But still with all your loving embraces, but every where distinguish with all tenderness of spirit between the person and the evil of the person; discern the evil with a quick and piercing eye, guard yourselves with all your might from it, maintain an irreconcilable aversion and enmity to it, but at the same time love the person; mourn over and groan for the person as for your brother, as for yourself, as for a sick and wounded member of your own body, until he be recovered from the evil which hath captivated him, into a fellowship with



you, into the purity and love of the divine nature, when God so pleases.

3. Let us learn from hence, that there may be anger in God towards his dearest children, and yet nothing in that anger contrary to the mystery, to the sweetness and to the glory of the gospel. What should hinder God from being angry with his own people? Is there not an object of anger in them while they are in the flesh, and whilst sin cleaves to their flesh and to them? Is there not in God, in the excellencies of the God-head, a contrariety unto this flesh and the uncleanness of it? Why then should we scruple to say God may be angry with his own people for their sins? Doth not God frequently carry himself towards his saints, as angry persons towards their friends with whom they are displeased? Doth he not upon our sin draw in his countenance? Doth not the power of God frequently put forth itself on the saints to consume sin in them, and that by terrible methods in righteousness? What is there in all this anger of God towards a saint that doth at all contradict the sweetness and glory of God? Doth he love ever the less for his anger? Nay, he loves so much the more, and this is one of the great mysteries of the gospel, that light and love works in darkness and anger itself. Is the wisdom of God ever the less beautiful? No, the same wisdom that sowed immortality in the grave, and that made the cross to ascend up to glory, can by his anger purify the air of a saint's spirit that it may receive the divine influences more clearly and more sweetly. There is nothing inconsistent in God's anger to his saints with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them, Jam. i. 19, 20: "Every man is exhorted to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Let it not be a digression, if I show how this scripture is true in a three-fold sense.

1. The first sense is this: the righteousness of God is not the principle that worketh in the wrath of man; all graces are called fruits of righteousness in the scripture. Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God, and he is our God, and the root of all righteousness in us; yea, our very righteousness. Wheresoever there is true spirituality, the spirit of God worketh in us, but this righteousness worketh not in the wrath of man's spirit. It was not in the great and strong winds which rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, that the Lord was; but in the still and small voice. It is not in a precipitated and angry spirit that God works, but in a simple, and calm, and waiting spirit. 1 Kings xix.

2. The second sense is this: that the works of anger are not righteous works, they are not works approved in the eye of God. You may in your anger kill men for religion-sake. You may in your angry zeal forfeit your estate, give up your bodies to be consumed by fire for the defence of truth. But this is not that which God accounts holiness; if you do all this and have not charity, the sweetest, the highest, and the divinest temper of love.

3. The third sense is, this wrath makes no

discovery of the righteousness of God. He that makes a judgment of the actings of Providence, or any state of things in the world, in his anger, and in the discontent of his own spirit, this man will never discover the righteousness of God in it. The secret of God is with a submitted and humble spirit; unto that man will God discover the mysteries of his works, and the beauty and glory that is in all his ways; "blessed are the pure in spirit for they shall see God;" a pure spirit is a calm spirit. There is nothing more contrary to the purity of the air than the dark clouds and foggy vapours. There is nothing more contrary to the purity of our spirits than this anger and wrath. An angry spirit can never see the glory of God, who is love throughout; nor shall ever the glory of God break forth in any of his ways to an angry spirit, until that spirit is swallowed up in the love of God; but the quiet spirit that runs like the waters of *Shilo*, that spirit doth and shall see God; that spirit shall see the righteousness of God, the excellencies of God; that spirit shall see the counsel of God in all his ways, in all his works, and still cry out, O my God! O infinite love!

4. Let us learn from what hath been said of anger in God, to hate and fly from sin, which is the fuel to that anger, that there may be nothing between God and us but love.

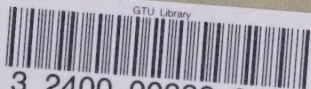
To conclude. There would be no end in speaking of these and some other perfections of God; and therefore I shut up this head of God's being love, and love being the universal perfection of the Deity, with this one general and comprehensive one.

The unsearchableness, the incomprehensibleness and infiniteness of God is an unsearchable, incomprehensible and infinite love and goodness. Not only all that which we know, all that which we can take in of God, so far as he hath discovered himself to us, and given us a capacity to know him; but all that which we cannot understand of him, we reasonably conclude from what hath been said, is all a depth, a mystery, an abyss of love, which still comprehends us and all things, although we and all things can never comprehend it. A depth which swallows up the most capacious spirits of men, saints and angels, but can never be fathomed by any spirit, but that which searcheth the depths of God. This incomprehensibleness of God is made up of those lengths, and breadths, and depths, and heights of love, which passeth all understanding, as we read Eph. iii. 18; a length, breadth, height and depth, which at once extends and exceeds all openings; a depth without bottom, a height without any bound, a breadth, a length without any measure; a love which passeth all knowledge, which stretcheth forth itself beneath, above, through and beyond all things; an unbounded treasury of divine love, goodness and glory; an inexhaustible spring and ocean of love and goodness, and perfection without beginning or end, without bottom or bound. We are too narrow to measure its comprehension, too proud to understand its condescensions, its stoopings, too low to take its heights, too aspiring to fathom its depths. It is a love which



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